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First Committee

8th Meeting
Friday, 21 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia Rodríguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Pennaneach (Togo) *(interpretation from French)*: It is my great pleasure to express to you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of Togo, warm and sincere congratulations on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee.

I also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner of Germany, for his outstanding work during the forty-eighth session. We would also like to express our congratulations to all the members of the Bureau and to the Committee Secretary, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi, and to his colleagues.

As every year, we have come here to keep our appointment with the history of mankind, whose development and transformations cannot take place without the express interest of the United Nations and its Member States in questions of disarmament and international peace and security. In this regard, the current session provides our States with an additional opportunity to put to the test their political will and their capacity to promote the necessary conditions to make it possible for the United Nations to achieve its ends.

During the past five years, which have marked the beginning of a new era rising from the ashes of the cold war, the world has witnessed important positive developments in the field of disarmament — notably the signing of the START agreements, the renewal by certain nuclear Powers of their unilateral moratoriums provisionally suspending nuclear tests, the accession of new States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which has been signed by a number of States.

The Conference on the review and possible extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will take place next spring. The active and resolute participation of delegations in the various preparatory sessions demonstrates the importance of this matter and the interest of States parties in it. The Togolese delegation expresses the earnest hope that this meeting will be crowned with success. In any case, we urge States parties to do everything in their power to remedy the existing shortcomings in the Treaty with a view to strengthening it, making it less discriminatory, guaranteeing the universality of its character and providing the non-nuclear States with the necessary security assurances.

In this connection, it is desirable to bear in mind the proposals made by the Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at their eleventh meeting, which was held in Cairo. It also seems essential that the Treaty be reviewed in a spirit of equality and justice before any decision is taken with regard to its indefinite extension.

In these circumstances, my delegation welcomes the reconstitution last January of the Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test-ban Treaty and it encourages all parties

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involved in the negotiations to redouble their efforts to overcome any difficulties and enable the Committee to conclude its work, preferably before the NPT review Conference takes place.

As Togo's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation stated at the 22nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 7 October, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament must be among the main objectives of the United Nations in this post-cold-war period. In this connection, my country attaches paramount importance to the creation of denuclearized zones throughout the world.

In the case of the African continent, Togo would like to endorse the report of the Group of Experts to Draw Up a Draft Treaty on the Denuclearization of Africa. We welcome what has been achieved by this Group, whose efforts recently led to the approval of the text of a draft treaty (A/49/436). However, it is important that the Groups mandate be renewed so that it may undertake, as soon as possible, the precise delimitation of the zone.

The delegation of Togo also welcomes the imminent entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and encourages the continuation of efforts to draw up similar instruments with a view to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world.

Transparency and openness in regard to armaments are essential if confidence is to be established between States. In this connection, my delegation welcomes the importance that States attach to the keeping of the Register of Conventional Arms. We reiterate our support for the activities that have been carried out in this connection, and we hope that the field of application of the Register will go beyond international transfers.

Despite all these noteworthy results, which seem to be paving the way for general and complete disarmament, my country continues to be profoundly disturbed by the constantly increasing proliferation of conventional weapons, the licit and illicit transfer of which dangerously compromises any effort to achieve disarmament, peace and security. In view of this situation, our States and the entire international community should promptly explore ways and means of strengthening the role and the intervention capacity of the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which are currently ill-structured and bereft of the material and human resources that are so essential to their functioning and to the proper performance that the international community expects of them.

The report of the Secretary-General on this matter — in document A/49/389 — makes it quite clear that the financial situation of the regional centres is rather disquieting. The particularly alarming case of the Regional Centre for Africa, which Togo has the honour of hosting, is a good illustration of this point and must be examined with care.

Concerned about the future of this important institution, the Togolese Government calls upon the First Committee and the General Assembly to take all necessary steps to revitalize its activities, as well as those of the Regional Centres in Asia and Latin America — notably by providing them with adequate financial resources and a management body based in the field in order to increase their effectiveness and to avoid their continued direction by the Secretariat in New York, which, in short, has a depressing effect on their performance because it is contrary to all the rules of good management.

Togo is convinced of the importance and the vitality of the role that should and can be played by Regional Centres in the field of subregional and regional disarmament, as well as in respect of preventive diplomacy and the settlement of disputes. If they are to undertake these tasks they must have the means to do so. The United Nations and the international community must stop being stingy with regard to the provision of funds. Nor should they underestimate the validity of these institutions, which have been set up to promote peace, security, disarmament and development, but which, through lack of resources, are rather inert. Indeed, they are ignored at a time when a number of States continue to be the theatre of bloody and lethal conflicts.

A regional centre for peace and disarmament along the lines of the one in Africa, is therefore something of proven usefulness. Its role should even be enhanced, and its activities further refined, so that it may make a greater contribution to checking the increasing flood of arms and, thereby, participate fully in the strengthening of regional security.

While thanking those countries that have pledged and made voluntary contributions to the Lomé Centre, I should like to take this opportunity to request all the other Member States and all men of good will to consider now contributing, in whatever way possible, to the collective effort to revitalize these Centres. My delegation therefore

hopes that the draft resolution on this topic that is to be submitted jointly by a number of regional groups and other interested countries will this year, once again, meet with approval and consensus.

Togo is concerned at the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects, particularly anti-personnel land-mines, which day after day claim countless victims throughout the world, especially among the civilian population. We therefore welcome the decision taken by some countries to declare a moratorium on the export of these mines. My delegation would encourage the First Committee to do its utmost in the course of the current session to explore ways and means to limit as much as possible the losses caused by these mines even after the end of the conflicts.

It has now been shown and admitted that armed conflicts are no longer the only threats to peace and security. Linked as they are with development, peace and security are jeopardized still more by non-military events that threaten the existence of nations and peoples. In our common effort to find genuine international security, our attention should therefore be turned, as a matter of priority, not towards the military deterrent as in the days of the cold war, but towards ways to combat those scourges that invalidate our efforts for social and economic development: hunger, disease, unemployment, poverty and social marginalization, to name but a few. Apart from efforts to combat the frantic arms race, all of these factors should be taken firmly into account in order to promote a climate of true peace and security in our regions.

The eradication of poverty in all its forms is therefore an absolute prerequisite of peace and security. Consequently, it should be considered in our discussions as one of the essential aims to be achieved for the welfare of our peoples.

Determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, men of good will, imbued with the ideals of peace and justice, jointed together half a century ago to establish the United Nations. Reason, wisdom and solidarity were the foundations of this undertaking, the purpose of which was to safeguard peace, preserve world political balance, and promote economic and social progress among all nations.

These are noble aims but they cannot be achieved unless there is a new form of international cooperation based on genuine partnership and full respect for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Despite the numerous initiatives and the current prospects offered by the disarmament process, we still have a long way to go before the advent of a genuine era of international peace and security.

It is therefore high time, now that the cold war is over, for us, the peoples of the United Nations, to avail ourselves of the opportunity offered by this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly to consolidate what has been achieved, to smooth out our differences, to build a broader consensus on actions that can be undertaken jointly to promote the process of general and complete disarmament, to reap the peace dividend and then to devote it to development activities in order to make it possible for man to live free, rid not only of the spectre of war but also of hunger, illiteracy and absolute penury.

To do everything possible to help to ensure peace, full security and freedom for our States: such is the sacred mission which our Committee should attempt to fulfil. The delegation of Togo wishes once again to assure the Committee of its full cooperation in working towards that end.

Mr. Bayart (Mongolia): At the outset, I wish to extend to you our sincere congratulations on your election to the Chair of this Committee and to express our confidence that with your wealth of experience you will guide us with much success through our deliberations. Our congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee.

As we take stock of the collective disarmament efforts over the last year, my delegation tends to agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that

> "... cooperation on disarmament was not only maintained but significantly enhanced by concerted actions and initiatives of Member States." *(A/49/1, para. 740)*

A number of positive developments at the bilateral level have helped to sustain the momentum in the field of disarmament. Here I wish to refer to the recent announcement by the Russian Federation and the United States of America that they would accelerate the implementation of the START I and START II Treaties. We welcome this commitment and urge other nuclear-weapon States expeditiously to join the process of nuclear disarmament.

We also welcome the agreement between Russia and China not to target strategic nuclear missiles at each other and drastically to reduce the number of troops stationed along their borders as a significant development which augurs well for strengthening the stability and confidence-building in the region and beyond.

Mongolia is encouraged by the most recent agreement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Faithful implementation of all its provisions is essential. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the reduction of tension and the enhancement of peace, security and cooperation on the Korean Peninsula require the concerted efforts of all parties concerned.

As much as we applaud the positive developments in the field of disarmament, we acknowledge that much remains to be done. The coming year, highlighted by the review and extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as the efforts by the Conference on Disarmament speedily to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty and to make substantial progress on other items before it, will be crucial in defining the international disarmament agenda for years to come.

As the international community focuses its attention on the forthcoming NPT review and extension Conference, it is important to exert every effort to strengthen the Treaty and promote universal adherence to it. With the recent accession of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia to the NPT, the number of States parties rose to 165; but the goal of ensuring truly universal adherence to the Treaty remains elusive as a number of States with significant nuclear capabilities still opt to remain outside the NPT framework.

Mongolia continues to believe that as a cornerstone of the present non-proliferation regime the NPT should be extended indefinitely at its 1995 Conference. Thorough preparatory work remains to be done to ensure the success of the Conference. We look forward to the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee in order to finalize the outstanding organizational and procedural matters and move ahead to discuss such issues of substance as the implementation and extension of the NPT. The success of the Conference rests ultimately with the steadfast implementation by the Parties to the NPT of their respective obligations. Mongolia shares the position that the nuclear-weapon States should, of necessity, bear enhanced responsibilities in creating conditions conducive to the strengthening of the NPT and should refrain from any actions that might undermine the Treaty and the regime established by it.

In this context, we expect the nuclear-weapon States to display in no uncertain way their political willingness to achieve the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The signal importance of a comprehensive treaty as an effective instrument against the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and as a major step towards nuclear disarmament cannot be overemphasized. Having a fully or largely agreed text of such a treaty by April of next year would to a decisive extent contribute to the success of the NPT review and extension Conference. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, has done commendable work by producing a rolling text, which notwithstanding its many brackets is a meaningful accomplishment. Nevertheless, we share the assessment that the progress in these negotiations, albeit substantial, is insufficient given the importance of the issue and its relevance to other major disarmament endeavours. Inter-sessional consultations could prove to be a useful tool in expediting the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

In an effort to contribute to the establishment of an effective verification system for the future comprehensive test-ban treaty, and in view of the value of its geographical location for seismic monitoring, Mongolia has proposed to establish on its territory an international verification site, which would be a part of the treaty's global monitoring network. We hope that this proposal will find the support and cooperation of interested States and international organizations.

Most of the nuclear-weapon States have continued to observe the moratorium on nuclear testing, thus contributing to the ongoing international non-proliferation efforts. However, the People's Republic of China has not joined the moratorium, as we had hoped it would, and has further carried on its programme of nuclear testing. The Government of Mongolia expresses its deep regret over an underground nuclear test conducted by China on 7 October this year and joins others in urging China to refrain from any further tests.

Another important avenue in the field of nuclear disarmament is the conclusion of a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Although the Conference on Disarmament failed to agree

on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on this issue, we still deem it important that the Conference recorded a consensus on the relevance of the Conference on Disarmament as a forum for negotiating such a treaty, as well as an agreement to establish an ad hoc committee once the mandate is in place. It is the hope of my delegation that the momentum created by the General Assembly consensus resolution 48/75 L will be sustained, and that the Conference on Disarmament, through its ad hoc Committee, will begin the negotiations on such a treaty in 1995.

Like many others, we are concerned as of late at the reported cases of nuclear smuggling. It is mostly the responsibility of national Governments to protect nuclear material and prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, but concerted efforts on the international level should also be envisioned in order to halt its spread. The recent decision of the International Atomic Energy Agency's General Conference to address this urgent issue by establishing a special group of government experts is an important and timely initiative.

We strongly believe that the prevailing situation in the nuclear field requires added efforts to assure non-nuclear-weapon States effectively against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Mongolia favours the early conclusion of a legally binding document containing unconditional and unlimited nuclear security assurances in favour of non-nuclear-weapon States. We feel that the Conference on Disarmament should re-establish its Ad Hoc Committee on this question in 1995 and that efforts should be applied to examine closely the specific proposals already introduced in the Conference on Disarmament.

It is gratifying to note that the five nuclear-weapon States have supported Mongolia's declaration of its territory as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and expressed their intention to respect that status. The Movement of Non-Aligned States has also welcomed that initiative as a commendable contribution to regional stability and confidence-building.

Mongolia welcomes the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian States (ASEAN), held last July in Bangkok, as a promising beginning conducive to promoting security and confidence-building in the Asia-Pacific region. This endeavour could be further developed into a regionwide mechanism of dialogue and cooperation on security and related matters through the participation of all interested States of the region.

In the regional context, we wish to register our continued support for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. The activities of the United Nations Regional Centres should be supported and strengthened in every possible way.

The announced intention of Cuba to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the substantial progress in drafting a treaty on the African nuclear-weapon-free zone bring the entire continents of Latin America and Africa closer to full non-nuclear status. These developments, in our view, encourage the efforts to establish such zones in other parts of the world.

In conclusion, I wish to reconfirm the importance that Mongolia attaches to the early entry into force and effective implementation of the chemical weapons Convention. We expect the First Committee to give further impetus to this process by adopting this year a consensus resolution on this matter. The ratification process for the chemical weapons Convention has been initiated in Mongolia, and we hope soon to join those States that have already ratified it.

I have touched briefly upon a few items that my delegation considers to be of priority importance. Such questions as transparency in armaments, operation and further development of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, prevention of an arms race in outer space, the biological weapons Convention and the strengthening of its verification regime, and the moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines also continue to occupy a prominent place on the international disarmament agenda and my delegation intends to contribute to the deliberations on these issues at a later stage.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): At the outset, I should like to convey to you, Sir, the congratulations of the delegation of Egypt on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your vast diplomatic experience and your well-known professional qualities will undoubtedly contribute most effectively to the success of our work. I should also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election. I also wish to pay a tribute to the disarmament secretariat. Having served as Chairman of this Committee two years ago, I highly appreciate its total devotion and high professionalism as does my delegation.

As we embark upon another session of the General Assembly, it is to be noted that the euphoria that prevailed following the demise of the ideological rift that dominated inter-State conduct for half a century has become somewhat subdued. We are witnessing a most disturbing escalation of

armed conflict around the world. It is therefore imperative that effective measures be undertaken to address this phenomenon. The United Nations is called upon and is no doubt duty-bound to fulfil the aspirations that were kindled in all peace-loving countries when the dawn of a brighter future was on the horizon. Many considered that the Charter principles represent the collective heritage of humanity and must certainly be respected in all areas of international relations, in particular in the field of disarmament with its direct bearing on the core of international peace and security. In point of fact, international relations should always be firmly and irreversibly anchored on a solid foundation of international law and justice as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations rather than on the predominance of military power.

Among the most pressing issues that face us during this session is that of nuclear disarmament. We note and welcome the broad measures that have been undertaken within the context of bilateral agreements between the United States of America and the Russian Federation to reduce their vast stockpiles of nuclear weapons. It is also reassuring that they have applied certain confidence-building measures in the nuclear field which reflect their commitment to peaceful coexistence. Nevertheless, we believe that we are entitled to expect more courageous and substantial measures by all nuclear-weapon States. We firmly believe that complete nuclear disarmament through the elimination of all nuclear weapons should be our ultimate goal.

The issue of nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority for the overwhelming majority of the members of the international community, whether in its global or regional dimensions. At the regional level, Egypt continues to advocate and strive for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world as an effective disarmament measure. Our conviction in this regard is amply exemplified by our initiative to establish such a zone in the Middle East. The broader initiative launched by President Mubarak in April 1990 for the establishment of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction in the region further strengthens this approach. Egypt has also actively supported and is participating in the efforts to conclude a treaty for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. It is our view that the implementation of such measures will have a far-reaching effect in eliminating regional tension and is conducive to strengthening peaceful relations among the States of the same region.

The issue of nuclear disarmament certainly warrants this high degree of attention on its own merits and is even more pressing as we approach the review and extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to begin in a few months. The Treaty has served as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime for the past quarter-century. It has demonstrated its value in limiting the spread of nuclear arms during periods of severe international turbulence. As we embark next year on an examination of the Treaty's usefulness and consider its extension, we find it necessary to draw attention to the fact that the degree of success of this Treaty has rested squarely on the political commitment of the non-nuclear-weapon parties to the Treaty's primary objective of preventing proliferation and the threat of an arms race in nuclear weapons. This has been demonstrated by their faithful implementation, on the whole, of its provisions.

As we prepare for the evaluation of this important legal instrument, we cannot avoid considering, if we are to draw the appropriate conclusions regarding its credibility, the degree of good faith in the implementation of its provisions by all its parties. This is the most important indicator in the entire evaluation process. We cannot therefore brush this issue aside, as some may wish, by superficial and unconvincing arguments intended only to preserve a preferential status for some parties.

Egypt is a staunch supporter of the non-proliferation Treaty. We are totally committed to the non-proliferation regime. We therefore regret that, 25 years after the Treaty's entry into force, it still lacks its most important element — universality.This state of affairs brings into question the resolve of the international community, particularly the nuclear-weapon States that are also permanent members of the Security Council, to address this issue seriously and effectively.

We certainly welcome the recent increase in the number of States acceding to the Treaty, yet we must emphasize that the issue of universality remains fundamental to the effectiveness of the Treaty in fulfilling its objectives. We therefore call on all parties, especially the five permanent members of the Security Council, to spare no effort for the achievement of this goal. We also call on all non-parties to heed the collective will of the international community by acceding to the Treaty and thereby strengthening international and regional security and facilitating the possibilities of its appropriate extension.

Undoubtedly, positive developments in the area of achieving a comprehensive test-ban treaty will also have great bearing on the 1995 Conference. We note with

satisfaction the progress that has been achieved in the Conference on Disarmament in relation to this matter. We entertain the hope that work will be accelerated in the intersessional period as well as during the first part of the forthcoming session of the Conference on Disarmament, so that the Treaty can be concluded in 1995, but we are not confident that that will be the case.

Equally fundamental to the 1995 Conference is the continuing stalemate surrounding the issue of providing security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. There has been almost no movement forward in response to what is clearly a justifiable and logical demand by States which of their own free will have renounced the nuclear option. The reluctance of some to deal with this issue becomes even more damaging to the efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime when the international community detects that assurances are being provided to specific States on a selective basis.

We continue to believe that there are various means by which this problem could be addressed. The most appropriate procedure would be for the Security Council to revise its resolution 255 (1968), provided of course that the political will exists for such action. It must be noted that resolution 255 (1968) was primarily adopted as a means to compensate for the deficiency in the provisions of the NPT, since it did not incorporate what was considered by the majority of the parties to be a crucial element. At the same time it is widely recognized that resolution 255 (1968) has become insufficient to provide the necessary security assurances, whether negative or positive, to non-nuclear-weapon States. It lacks, first, an explicit and unequivocal determination by the Security Council that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-weapon State constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Secondly, it lacks a definite stipulation that would deter such threat or use. Thirdly, it contains no commitment that the Council would embark on immediate and effective measures in response to such threat or use and, fourthly, it lacks a comprehensive definition scope of the assistance to be provided.

It is also to be recalled that resolution 255 (1968) was adopted with five abstentions and without the participation of the People's Republic of China, a matter that greatly diminishes its credibility. Egypt hopes and expects that appropriate action will be taken at the earliest possible time by the Security Council to adopt a new resolution that would contain credible negative and positive assurances of a legally binding nature and supported by the five permanent members of the Security Council. This would conform to the Council's responsibilities under the Charter and the Council's Summit declaration of 1991 to strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

We welcome the proposal for the cut-off of the production of fissile materials and consider it a further step in the right direction towards nuclear disarmament and the consolidation of the non-proliferation regime. We are hopeful that the Conference on Disarmament might commence negotiations with a view to concluding an effectively verifiable treaty to implement that proposal. The treaty, in our view, should also address the problem of the existing stockpiles of such dangerous materials.

We have taken note of the extent of the work that has been achieved in the preparatory process for the review and extension Conference of the NPT and we hope that the remaining issues to be resolved will be concluded during the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, which will take place here in New York next January. We are confident that this will be the case, always provided that all delegations demonstrate the necessary flexibility and that those few who are continuing in their efforts to manipulate the issues under consideration to serve their own objectives will desist from such practices. Our objective must be accommodation by all.

Egypt is equally committed to pursuing disarmament in the field of conventional weapons. In this area, as is the case when considering weapons of mass destruction, we are guided by the prerequisites of safeguarding national security. We are committed to achieving this at the lowest possible level of armaments. Experience has shown that a higher level of armaments, qualitative or quantitative, does not necessarily enhance security: on the contrary, it increases suspicion and thereby leads to an escalation of tension, which in turn produces an arms race, and eventually conflicts erupt. It is our considered opinion that the resources of the world can be put to better use for the benefit of mankind as a whole, rather than being squandered on military hardware.

I turn now to another important issue in the disarmament dimension — namely, transparency in armaments. I would like once again this year to reiterate Egypt's strong conviction that transparency may play an important role in support of disarmament efforts. A greater degree of transparency in military matters must result in increased confidence and diminished suspicion and miscalculations, thereby avoiding conflicts and disputes.

Unfortunately, in our eagerness to reap the benefits of applying this simple and effective principle, we hastily established, in 1991, a United Nations Register, not of armaments but only of conventional arms. From the outset, Egypt drew attention to the fact that any mechanism that is created to serve the purposes of disarmament must be comprehensive, so as to guarantee equally the security interest of all States on a non-discriminatory basis. It is unrealistic to expect that States might prejudice their security interests by adopting partial measures and mechanisms that place them at a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* others. To advance arguments that such a Register may evolve at an undetermined time and become comprehensive is to disregard the inherent relationship of the various components of security.

The latest meeting of the Group of Experts a few months ago here in New York to consider the possibility of further developing the Register was both revealing and disappointing. The failure to reach agreement on expansion of the scope of the Register is a testimony to the lack of political will to embrace meaningfully the principle of transparency.

We can only attribute the reluctance of almost half of the United Nations Member States, as things stand today, to participate in this mechanism to their legitimate concern not to associate themselves with a process that is blatantly discriminatory. Let us recall that paragraph 11 (b) of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L of 1991 stipulated definitively that the scope of the Register should be expanded in 1994. The group of governmental experts was requested:

> "to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development".

The failure of the Group of Experts to fulfil its mandate or to meet the expectations of many — including my own delegation — that the scope of the Register would be expanded in 1994 will, in our opinion, only lead to a further reduction in participation in the Register in coming years. This is a serious matter, and my delegation hopes that it will be seriously considered by the Group of Experts and by this Committee at this session.

Finally, in addressing the complex and important disarmament issues and their relationship to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security, it is appropriate once again to reiterate our long-held views concerning the fundamental criteria that must be satisfied if disarmament measures are to be considered effective and worthy of support. These are: that they contribute towards enhancing security; that they be comprehensive in nature; that they lead to the elimination or substantial reduction in all aspects of military capabilities in a balanced manner and, lastly, that the obligations they prescribe are, again, balanced and equitable.

Mr. Tucker (Bahamas): As the delegation of a sister State of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, the Bahamas delegation is pleased, Sir, to see you presiding over the Committee's work at the forty-ninth session, and joins other delegations in congratulating you upon your election as Chairman. We are confident that, given your experience and skilled leadership, and the commitment of your country to the disarmament agenda, we will reach a successful outcome. Permit me also to extend congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

At the forty-eighth session, the Committee continued to achieve tangible results with respect to its agenda. The leadership and diplomatic skills displayed by the former Chairman, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, contributed significantly to those results, and my delegation pays him tribute, especially for his work in advancing the revitalization exercises of the Committee.

While the Bahamas welcomes the new positive atmosphere and attitudes towards arms control and disarmament that have emerged in the last four years as a result of the new trends prevailing in international relations, we can all agree that a world of peace and stability is a long way from becoming a reality. Nuclear, chemical, biological and conventional weapons still exist. Additionally, a myriad of problems continues to pose serious threats to the maintenance of a climate of peace and serenity. These include, among other problems, ethnic and religious conflicts, environmental degradation and poverty.

The ongoing crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic and the civil unrest in Rwanda, Somalia and Liberia, further demonstrate that as we enter the twenty-first century, this Organization's ability and capacity to address effectively and expeditiously future conflicts remain important.

Crucial to the international community's efforts in the maintenance of international peace and securities, without question, the advancement of the disarmament process. Notwithstanding successes since the last session — namely the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, to which my

Government became a signatory in March of this year; the decision of the United States Government to extend its testing moratorium to September 1995; and the decision taken in the Conference on Disarmament to reestablish its Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test-ban treaty — we cannot loose sight of the reality that the existence of large arsenals of nuclear weapons and the danger of further proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including conventional weapons, continue to threaten the security of all States, large and small. We therefore consider disarmament and the questions of non-proliferation of nuclear arms — particularly now, after the end of the cold war — to be among the most serious of challenges, requiring the ongoing attention and commitment of all States Members of the United Nations, regardless of their nuclear status.

In his document on the disarmament agenda of the international community in 1994 and beyond, the Secretary-General presents two statements that address possible approaches that the international community could take in the light of recent developments in the area of disarmament. We concur with his assessment that

> "the techniques of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping must be integrated into, and become part of, the disarmament effort".

These techniques of crisis management were identified as early warning, the collection and analysis of information, fact-finding and other forms of confidence-building measures, and were considered vital, both for arms control and for the maintenance of peace.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), of 1968, has long been recognized as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the most universally supported such instrument in all history. We share the view that universal accession to the NPT and full compliance with its obligations constitute the best way to guarantee nuclear non-proliferation. We welcome, in this regard, the recent accessions to the Treaty, as well as the decision of Kazakhstan to ratify it.

As a State party to the NPT, my Government looks forward to the convening of the 1995 review and extension Conference, which we view as representing an opportunity for States parties, nuclear and non-nuclear alike, to translate previous pronouncements on the non-proliferation issue into concrete action. We further support an unconditional and indefinite extension of the Treaty. At the same time, we would not want the Conference to become preoccupied with the issue of extension, but would wish it also to address those issues that have made the final outcome of previous conferences unsuccessful.

The decision taken in the Conference on Disarmament to give its Ad Hoc Committee a mandate to negotiate a comprehensive test-ban treaty, after two decades, was indeed a historic one. It represented the culmination of the efforts of the international community as a whole to bring about the long-cherished goal of a complete halt to the testing of these weapons. The enthusiasm of the international community, however, must in no way lead to the hasty conclusion of a test-ban treaty. We must remain realistic, taking into account the many diverse positions on this issue. Any comprehensive test-ban treaty must, in the view of my delegation, be universal, verifiable, effective and non-discriminatory.

While efforts to curtail and eliminate the threat of a possible nuclear holocaust are moving at a respectable pace, it is the view of my delegation that the time has come for the same attention to be given to the question of conventional weapons. Such weapons and their proliferation have to date accounted for 23 million deaths since the end of the Second World War. Countless more people are being killed every day. This continuing spiral of violence is compounded by the high level of arms transfers. The records show that, in spite of the reduction of conflicts at the regional and global levels, the military expenditures of many nations, both developed and developing, continue to be beyond the limits of their legitimate security needs and are draining resources away from the real needs of people.

While we view the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as a step in the right direction, we note with concern that at the recent meeting of the Group of Experts studying the expansion of the Register, there was a deadlock on the issue of including more weapons systems and on the question of including national production and holdings of arms in addition to the current system of reporting imports and exports. It is our hope that these outstanding differences can be resolved so that the future of the Register may not be jeopardized.

The regional approach must continue to play a catalytic role in the disarmament effort. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is one way to promote confidence at the regional level. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the ratification by Brazil, Argentina and Chile of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and the announcement by Cuba that it will sign the Treaty in the near future, along with the signing of the quadripartite safeguards agreement

on 4 March 1994, have further strengthened the process of consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty.

Likewise, my delegation would like to applaud the work undertaken by Member States of the African region, which has made it possible to finalize the draft treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. We further call on Member States from other regions to exercise the same political will and spirit of compromise to advance the process in their regions.

Turning to the Committee's agenda, we note that at this session we will be experimenting with a new format with regard to how we approach our work at this and future sessions. Last session's draft decision contained in part II of the Committee's report on agenda item 156 (A/48/688/Add.1), adopted by the Committee and then by the General Assembly without a vote, provides general guidelines and recommendations to ensure effective functioning of the Committee, emphasizing a three-phased approach based on efficiency, more intensive and focused consultations and overall effectiveness. My delegation will continue to support proposals that are in the best interest of improving the Committee's agenda and fulfilling its mandate.

Finally, the Bahamas delegation has been participating in the work of this Committee for a little over 21 years. Our status as a non-nuclear, non-military State has in no way limited that participation. Our primary concern, which must be shared by the entire international community, is for a world free of nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction, in order that mankind may be able to live without the threat of total annihilation.

The year 1995 will be a major turning-point in the history of the United Nations as it celebrates 50 years of existence. It is our hope that it will also be a major turning-point in the disarmament agenda of this Committee. My delegation will continue to cooperate in that endeavour.

Mr. Abdul Momin (Brunei Darussalam): On behalf of my delegation, may I at the outset join previous speakers in offering Mr. Valencia Rodríguez my sincere congratulations on his election to the chairmanship of this Committee. My very best wishes also go to the other members of the Bureau.

We are now beginning to see more support for initiatives to eliminate the threats to world peace and security presented by the development and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The nuclear-test-ban Treaty, together with nuclear non-proliferation agreements and moves towards partial and total disarmament, has allowed regions and Powers to cooperate and has helped to alter the previously adversarial nature of international politics. This development is very much welcomed by smaller non-nuclear countries such as Brunei Darussalam, and we hope that this trend will continue. In this respect, we are encouraged to note the progress of dialogue and diplomacy in dealing with recent matters in North Korea.

Nevertheless, I feel that considerable political will is required on the part of all of us if we are to reach our goals. The market demand for weapons, for example, may run counter to the interests of international peace and security. Similarly, the need to protect sovereignty and independence may result in a demand for more arms. For these reasons, we must continue doing all we can to give priority to transforming agreements signed on paper into effective mechanisms for peace.

In terms of Brunei Darussalam's specific positions on these matters, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we continue to uphold the importance of this Treaty through our participation in the ongoing meetings of the Preparatory Committee. As to the Review Conference to be held next year, Brunei Darussalam's position will be to support the extension of the Treaty. This, I believe, will allow countries to accede to the Treaty and join in international efforts to reduce the risk of nuclear war. Brunei Darussalam also welcomes the many pledges of support for the extension and sees them as positive steps towards the strengthening of peace and international security for all.

On the whole, Brunei Darussalam feels that disarmament will be one of the ways in which countries can avoid conflict. There is now an opportunity for nuclear and non-nuclear States to come together and contribute to a nuclear-free world.

Mr. Yativ (Israel): At the outset, I wish to extend my congratulations to the Chairman on his election to his office. My delegation is confident that he and the other officers of the Committee will steer the deliberations of this Committee with the utmost wisdom, skill and competence.

I am addressing this Committee today after a year that has witnessed outstanding developments in the Middle East. This week, in Amman, Jordan and Israel have initialled a historic peace treaty — the first treaty between Israel and an Arab neighbour since the convening of the Madrid Conference. As a result of the Cairo agreement, signed in

May this year, the Palestinian people gained control of the Gaza Strip and Jericho. A promising dialogue is taking place between Damascus and Jerusalem. Multilateral meetings are intensively engaged in laying the ground for an infrastructure for regional cooperation. We hope, indeed we are confident that all this will generate an agenda for a new Middle East.

The multilateral talks, which constitute an integral part of the peacemaking efforts, have also produced tangible results in all their working groups. With relevance to the discussions of this Committee, I wish to refer to the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security. It is well known that the goal of this Working Group, within the multilateral peace process, is to complement the bilateral talks by seeking cooperative responses to security problems pertaining to our region. At a time when the bilateral talks are gaining significant momentum, it is also time to recall that the working group has proved to be the exclusive forum in which to address matters of regional security.

Confidence-building measures are at present being discussed and negotiated within the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security, on which the hopes of the negotiating parties are riveted. It is our view that in the unique circumstances of the Middle East, an arms control process has to begin with confidence-building measures. In this respect, a necessary sequence must be followed, one which includes measures that, first of all, do not impair the national security of the negotiating partners and that can be established on a bilateral or multilateral basis. Once agreed, they have to be tested over time in order to instil confidence. Confidence-building measures of a more pervasive nature, and certainly arms control, require that all States of the region abjure war. Such peace is, of course, contingent primarily on political accommodation.

On the relationship between confidence building and peace, the Secretary-General of the United Nations stated in his report dated 10 September 1990 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East as follows:

> "Confidence must be built on all sides: ... confidence that military solutions to political problems are excluded ... Most important of all, there must be progress in solving the fundamental conflicts in the region." *(A/45/435, para. 110)*

Regional security problems can be settled only among the States of the region. The positive developments in the peace process are conducive to building confidence among the States — a prerequisite for diminishing the levels of suspicion and hostility, and for the solution of regional problems. The process has already begun, and there is no doubt that it will contribute to enhancing peace and stability in the Middle East.

The concept of regionality is the backbone of Israel's approach to matters of regional security and arms control. Notwithstanding its regional approach, Israel has manifested an increasing and continuing openness in addressing global issues on arms control. We have taken part, on expert levels, in discussions and negotiations on various arms control subjects in New York, Geneva and the Hague. I should like to elaborate on several issues.

First, anti-personnel land-mines planted during times of armed conflict and left after the conflict is over have caused many tragedies for civilian populations all over the world. Addressing the worldwide effort to reduce the damage caused by the proliferation of land-mines, Israel has joined the sponsors of resolution 48/75 K, adopted at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, entitled "Moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines".

As called for by that resolution, the Government of Israel has decided upon a moratorium of two years on the transfer of anti-personnel land-mines. In addition to the two-year moratorium, the Government of Israel offered its know-how, assistance and training in de-mining. Israel hopes that these steps, which are humanitarian in nature, will reinforce the global efforts in this field. Israel will also adopt, at this session of the General Assembly, a constructive approach on this matter.

Regarding transparency in armaments, we took part in the work of the group of experts that met in New York to examine the question of the expansion of the Register. It is appropriate at this juncture to outline Israel's position.

First, Israel was one of the first countries to support resolution 46/36 L, by which the General Assembly established the Register and Israel has submitted its reports for the Register in accordance with that resolution.

Secondly, countries and regions face different political, military and security conditions. Although issues relating to transparency in armaments might have negative effects on its security, Israel has agreed to discuss certain measures. Such measures as the exchange of information

and early notification of certain military activities are already on the agenda of the Regional Security and Arms Control Working Group.

Thirdly, there are certain observations that must be made. Some countries would like to see the Register extended to cover issues such as transparency in military holdings and procurement through national production, weapons of mass destruction, and the transfer of high technology with military applications. As conflicts in various parts of the world have a tendency to develop at different paces, the Register can only require the lowest global common denominator as far as transparency in armaments is concerned. Beyond that level, transparency in armaments ought to be dealt with in the regional context. Hence, Israel, like other countries, continues to believe that conditions are not yet ripe for discussion of issues of transparency in armaments beyond the categories agreed upon by the United Nations. In his opening statement at the 3rd meeting of this Committee, the Secretary-General said that the Register was "intended as a cooperative exercise in confidence building". Indeed this is the *raison d'être* of the Register, and in the building of confidence time has an important role to play.

Fourthly, the goals of transparency in armaments cannot be achieved unless all countries in the region provide the data required for the Register. More countries, especially from our area, should contribute to the Register. Only then and following discussions in the regional framework can the matter of measures for more transparency in armaments be addressed.

Israel has expressed its support for the banning of nuclear-test explosions and has taken an active role in the negotiations in Geneva on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, following the consensus on the relevant resolution at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Israel believes that the organization to be set up under such a treaty should enable each State party to exercise its rights in the various organs on an equal and non-discriminatory basis. A global and universally applicable comprehensive test-ban treaty will also play a supportive role at the regional level. Israel expects all States in the Middle East to adhere to the treaty as an important step towards regional stability and security. Israel hopes that at the forthcoming round of negotiations it will be able to participate as a full member of the Conference on Disarmament.

Israel has consistently maintained a constructive and positive attitude towards the Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The Middle East has known the threat and use of chemical weapons. Over the years, Israel has called for the elimination of chemical weapons and the establishment in the Middle East of a region free from chemical weapons.

Israel was also among the original signatories of the chemical weapons Convention in January 1993 in Paris. On that occasion, the Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr. Shimon Peres, reiterated Israel's unqualified commitment to the Convention when he said that the chemical weapons Convention must refer to our region and that the region at large must adhere to its principles and comply with its provisions. Israel is convinced that the chemical weapons Convention can be genuinely effective if it is treated solely on its merits and if its universality is guaranteed. That means that any linkage between the Convention and the nuclear or any other issue is totally unacceptable for Israel. Unfortunately, several States in the region are still currently arming themselves with chemical weapons. Therefore, the abolishing of chemical weapons and the creating of a world and Middle East free of chemical weapons are important to the achievement of comprehensive peace and stability in the region.

Israel gives unqualified support to the principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and it voted in favour of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) when the Treaty was adopted by the General Assembly in 1968. Israel also supports the work of the Preparatory Committee on the extension of the NPT and took part, as an observer, in the Preparatory Committee that convened in Geneva in September of this year.

Such support, however, does not absolve Israel from assessing the conditions and realities of its region. Given the volatile nature of the Middle East, Israel advocated and continues to advocate the establishment, in due course, of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, freely and directly negotiated, including mutual verification and encompassing all States of the region.

On the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East the Secretary-General stated:

> "A zone can be even more effective in this regard than the NPT, essential as that instrument and its IAEA safeguards systems are." *(A/45/435, para. 109)*

Sheer necessity dictates our attitude, and the volatility of our region adds caution against any precipitate renunciation of our agenda for arriving at a nuclear-

weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Israel's policy on the nuclear issue is based on the following four principles.

First: comprehensiveness. The nuclear issue should be dealt with in the full context of the peace process, as well as of all the security problems, conventional and non-conventional.

Secondly: a regional framework. Nuclear non-proliferation will be achieved and ascertained only by establishing a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Thirdly: a step-by-step approach. Practicality dictates beginning the process with confidence- and security-building measures, establishing peaceful relations and, in due course, complementing the process by dealing with conventional and non-conventional arms control, where priorities are assigned to systems that experience has proved to be destructive and destabilizing.

Fourthly: the primacy of the peace process. Negotiations on all issues concerning the security of the region have to take place in a free and direct way — as they are indeed conducted in the bilateral and multilateral talks — within the framework of the peace process.

This is an opportune moment in the history of our region. It provides an auspicious and unique opportunity for solving regional problems and achieving peace and stability. It is incumbent on us to take advantage of the momentum that is developing in order to enhance regional security. The process has already begun within the framework of the multilateral talks, in which Israel is playing an active role.

The peace process in all its facets deserves, especially at this time, the unqualified support and understanding of the international community. The General Assembly has a unique opportunity to bestow its unreserved blessings upon the peacemaking efforts and thus contribute to this historic process. At its forty-eighth session the General Assembly reacted to the new reality in the Middle East by beginning to change obsolete resolutions drafted at the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the last year also we have seen a positive change in this Committee. Member States have realized that agenda item 65, entitled "Israeli nuclear armament", serves no purpose other than to single out Israel since the text contained no point of substance that was not taken up in the resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The total removal of this resolution from the agenda will be in line with the new reality that is emerging in the Middle East. It will also follow the example of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which at its Thirty-eighth Conference, in September 1994, finally resolved to put an end to years of singling out Israel and adopted a positive resolution for the restoration of technical assistance to Israel, which it had been denied ever since 1981.

In conclusion, it is Israel's hope that the General Assembly will place itself squarely behind the peace negotiations as the only venue for the settlement of outstanding issues on the Middle East, and thus contribute to lasting peace based on understanding and reconciliation.

Mr. Hou Zhitong (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: I wish, at the outset, to express my delegation's warm congratulations to Mr. Valencia Rodríguez on his election as Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly at this session. My congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee. I am confident that, under such leadership, this Committee will accomplish its mission successfully. I should like to take this opportunity also to thank Mr. von Wagner of Germany, for his contribution as Chairman of the First Committee during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

We feel encouraged by the presence of His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, and by his important opening statement to the First Committee on 17 October last.

With the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations approaching, we cannot but recall that, in the twentieth century, mankind has, unfortunately, twice suffered the awful scourge of war, and that the cold war that followed subjected the world's people to the shadow of nuclear war for a considerable period of time. The drastic changes that have been taking place in the international situation make it possible now to avert another world war and to increase the chances for the complete prohibition and the thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. The changes make it possible also for mankind ultimately to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. Therefore, nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war still remain the shared tasks of top priority for the international community.

In ushering in the twenty-first century, mankind is faced with new opportunities, as well as challenges, as regards maintaining peace and promoting development. The international community should step up its efforts and should work together for the early realization of a world free of nuclear weapons. China has always stood for the complete prohibition and the thorough destruction of all

weapons of mass destruction. For this purpose, His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, proposed at the current session of the General Assembly that a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons should be concluded in the same way as the conventions banning all biological and chemical weapons. Under it all nuclear Powers should undertake the obligation to destroy all their nuclear weapons under effective international supervision. This, we believe, would lead to the harnessing of nuclear energy in the full service of the lofty goal of peace and development for the benefit of mankind. The Chinese Government is looking forward to a positive response from the countries concerned.

On the very first day that it possessed nuclear weapons, China undertook unilaterally and unconditionally not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, and has since consistently called for the conclusion by all nuclear-weapon States of an international treaty on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other. In order to promote negotiations on such a treaty, China has formally presented a draft to other nuclear-weapon States, since it is apparent that conditions are now ripe for the five nuclear-weapon States to negotiate and conclude an international treaty to this effect. We believe that the early conclusion of the proposed treaty will greatly reduce the threat of a nuclear war and contribute to world peace, security and development.

It is a well-known fact that China has all along supported the demand of the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon States for security assurances. China has long committed itself to the unconditional non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones, while calling upon other nuclear-weapon States to undertake the same commitment and to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States in the form of an international legal instrument. At the moment, it is of great practical significance to resolve the issue without delay. In this connection, China appreciates the constructive proposals put forward by the non-aligned countries and stands ready to explore, along with others, an appropriate solution to the issue on the basis of those proposals.

China has always supported the demand and the efforts of the countries concerned to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in the light of their respective regional realities. We maintain that nuclear-weapon States should respect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones and undertake the relevant obligations. In this connection, it is worth noting that countries in Latin America and the South Pacific have made unswerving and tremendous efforts in this regard. We would also like to commend the latest progress achieved by African countries in their endeavour to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa.

We are pleased to note that the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva have made a good start and have achieved notable progress after years of intensive work. All the parties involved took a positive attitude towards the negotiations. China has always exercised the utmost restraint in nuclear testing, and has conducted fewer such tests than any other nuclear-weapon State. Proceeding from the principled position of complete prohibition and the need for complete destruction of nuclear weapons, China has participated in the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty in a positive and cooperative manner from the very outset. The good faith and positive attitude of the Chinese Government will remain unchanged. We would like to reaffirm my Government's support for the conclusion of a comprehensive, effective and universal nuclear-test-ban treaty as early as possible and — I should like to emphasize here — not later than 1996. China is willing to join with others and to continue its contribution to the achievement of this objective.

The review and extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is drawing closer. The Chinese Government hopes that, as one of the important and most nearly universal international instruments in the field of arms control today, the Treaty has played a positive role in the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, although there are some weak points regarding the balance of rights and obligations for States parties. As a contracting Party, China is in favour of a smooth extension of the NPT and will make its own efforts to this end. Likewise, the Chinese Government firmly supports the just demand of the non-nuclear-weapon States of the third world for the enhancing of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which should be considered by the 1995 NPT Conference as an important agenda item.

China supports all efforts aimed at promoting international security, nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. On the basis of this position, China favours the conclusion, through negotiation, of a convention banning the production of weapons-grade fissile materials. We are ready to work together with other countries to promote the realization of this objective.

The Special Conference of States parties to the biological weapons Convention, which was held with success recently, decided to establish an ad hoc group to explore further the question of means to strengthen the implementation of the biological weapons Convention. China will take an active part in the work of the ad hoc group for the actual enhancement of the biological weapons Convention.

Since the chemical weapons Convention was opened for signature, the preparatory work for the implementation of the Convention has proceeded smoothly. China supports the purposes and objectives of the Convention and was among the first of the signatories. We are now making preparations for the early ratification of the chemical weapons Convention. We hope that the countries with special responsibilities with regard to chemical weapons will speed up their ratification process and fulfil their obligations under the Convention.

Thanks to the efforts of all countries, some progress has been achieved in the field of international disarmament. However, the international community has to face a series of new challenges, continue to make efforts for the early realization of the objective of establishing a new international political and economic order on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and create a peaceful and safe environment favourable to the development of all countries. The international community has a long way to go to realize a world free of nuclear weapons and should therefore redouble its efforts. China is willing to join others and contribute continuously to that end.

Mrs. Lingaya (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Madagascar is happy to convey its warm congratulations to Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Our congratulations also go to the other officers of the Committee. We are confident that the great talents of Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez will ensure that the Committee's work will be successful. My delegation assures him of its full cooperation.

The end of the cold war has brought about a revolution in international relations. In the field of disarmament and international security, such striking progress has been made as the bilateral agreements between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on reducing strategic offensive weapons, the moratoriums on nuclear tests declared by France, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, and the signing in January 1993 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, which offers fresh prospects for progress in eliminating weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation expresses the hope that the international climate, now favourable to promoting the process of disarmament, will be advantageous for the negotiations that are being conducted under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating forum. We are thinking in particular of the banning of nuclear tests, of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of those weapons, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and the question of transparency in armaments.

A comprehensive ban on nuclear tests is one of the key questions facing the international community. The conclusion of an internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning all nuclear tests would be an effective way to realize the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), one of the most important international disarmament instruments. Madagascar would like to see it extended at the Review Conference in 1995.

With respect to effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, my delegation notes with regret that it was not possible to achieve consensus at the 1994 annual session of the Conference on Disarmament, on the question of so-called negative security assurances. An international agreement to assure States not possessing nuclear weapons against the use or threat of use of such weapons would help to establish a climate of trust and understanding among States.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction and the stockpiling of conventional weapons constitute challenges to the international community in view of their destructive nature, in particular in regions of the world where tensions and conflicts persist fuelled by the resurgence of nationalism, extremism, xenophobia and drug-trafficking. As a result, there is a need to step up efforts to attain the final objective of general and complete disarmament.

Enhancing the effectiveness of instruments used to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction necessarily includes reviewing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the effective

implementation of the Convention on chemical weapons, strengthening the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the setting up of an ad hoc committee to undertake the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear military purposes.

With respect to the stockpiling of conventional weapons, transparency is the key to controlling illicit flows of weapons and to expand cooperation in this field. Madagascar acknowledges the important contribution which the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the system of standardized reporting of military expenditure make towards fostering transparency in the control of conventional weapons. My delegation supports efforts to improve these mechanisms and believes that these will be conducive to establishing a higher level of confidence among States.

Furthermore, my delegation believes that transparency in the field of armaments should facilitate transfers of military technology for peaceful purposes to the common good; at the same time it is desirable for the resources released by the reduction of military expenditure to be used for development projects for the benefit of our peoples.

My delegation associates itself with the disquiet expressed by the international community concerning the threats to civilian populations of unexploded land-mines scattered throughout the world. My delegation therefore supports efforts to strengthen the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

Since we believe that a regional approach may serve to complement worldwide disarmament efforts, Madagascar attaches great importance to the principle of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace. My delegation particularly welcomes the progress achieved at Addis Ababa in May 1994 by a group of experts whose task was to draft a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. By contrast, we regret that the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace has not been implemented and we express the hope that improvements in the international political environment will help to dispel misgivings about this means of achieving the objectives of peace, security and stability in that region.

My delegation takes the view that the question of international peace and security cannot be tackled solely from the standpoint of disarmament but rather requires an integrated approach that would take into account economic, social and political aspects. The need to embrace disarmament and the maintenance of peace within a comprehensive approach to all aspects of the question means that the United Nations is the best forum for negotiations on peace and security.

Madagascar particularly appreciates the Organization's continuing efforts in the area of preventive diplomacy and the maintenance and consolidation of peace. However, it should be noted that effective maintenance of peace depends on the political resolve of States to take measures to achieve general and complete disarmament and on their commitment to creating a climate of mutual confidence and cooperation in order to bring about the advent of a new world based on the principles of peace, justice and equity.

Mr. Tayeb (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is my pleasure, on behalf of my delegation, to convey to you, Sir, sincere congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Committee. We are confident that your wide-ranging expertise and diplomatic skill will lead our deliberations to a successful conclusion. I should like also to extend our congratulations to the members of the Bureau on their election.

The presence and the statement before the Committee of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, is a source of pleasure to us and a testimony to the importance of this Committee's responsibilities and the significance of the role it plays in establishing international peace and security. The valuable and important substance of the Secretary-General's statement will be a guiding light for our Committee and will enrich its deliberations. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose commitment to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the principles of international legality is the cornerstone of its policies and of its approach to international affairs, attaches great importance to the strengthening of the United Nations role in dealing with international issues in general and with the issues of international peace and security in particular.

His Royal Highness the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country reiterated, in his statement before the General Assembly on 4 October 1994, that the success of the international community in addressing the issues of international peace and security has been and continues to be dependent on the commitment by its members to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the existence of their political will to implement the resolutions of international legality. As evidence of the validity of that

principle, he referred to the success of the international community in standing up to the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait in 1991. That aggression was defeated and the legitimate rights of Kuwait were restored, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the problem has been intractable and the Serb aggression against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued because the Serb aggression has not been dealt with in accordance with the fundamental principles of international legality embodied in the United Nations Charter.

I should like to add here that the cooperation and cohesion of the international community has made it possible, only a week or so ago, to deter yet another Iraqi aggression that was about to be launched against Kuwait, through another rash adventure the ruling regime in Iraq was on the point of embarking on when it started massing its forces along the Kuwaiti border with the intention of perpetrating another crime against Kuwait and the States of the region, an act that would have threatened international peace and security. However, the international community's strong stand in one united front and its strict and firm implementation of the resolutions of international legality forced the Iraqi regime to review its calculations and to realize that the international coalition against it has not fallen apart as it had hoped. Consequently, it was compelled to withdraw its massed military forces and military equipment from the Kuwaiti border. Here we wish to reiterate that the cohesion of the international front is the only firm guarantee that makes it possible to force Iraq to implement all relevant Security Council resolutions without any prevarication or selectivity.

The issues of peace, security and disarmament are an integral whole. In order for a secure international environment to emerge, such an environment should be founded on justice and equality, respect for the sovereignty and independence of States, non-interference in their internal affairs, respect for their internationally recognized borders, the right of all States to fully control their natural resources without any outside interference and the renunciation of the use or threat of use of force as a means of settling disputes.

In this context, comprehensive, balanced and non-selective disarmament is of great importance for the achievement of international security. Proceeding from its consistent stance of recognizing the right of all States to security through comprehensive disarmament and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia signed last year the chemical weapons Convention and, as is well known, is a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the biological weapons Convention. We consider our accession to these instruments to be a contribution to international efforts which aim at eliminating all weapons of mass destruction from the world once for all.

The end of the cold war and the emergence of a new international order should pave the way towards freeing the world of the terror of nuclear weapons and the threat such weapons pose to all mankind. In this regard, we believe it is vitally important to elaborate an international treaty that would prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. We also believe it is important to seek the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The significant progress and *détente* achieved through the Middle East peace process in which my country is an active participant, has not been accompanied, regrettably, by the existence of real feelings of security and safety among the peoples of the region. Such feelings of security have been lacking because of the lack of security imbalance as a result of Israel's possession of destructive nuclear armaments that are not subject to any international legal control. Israel continues to ignore international calls to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards and verification regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This is a stance that is not in keeping with the new vision of a peaceful Middle East and does not respond to the basic and objective requirements of peace. We therefore hope that this question will be dealt with responsibly and will be accorded the importance it deserves in a manner that would reflect the resolve and determination of international legality to free mankind of all nuclear weapons.

My country supports the creation of zones that are free of all weapons of mass destruction as this would constitute a major step towards the ultimate goal of eliminating all weapons of mass destruction from the world.

While we note with satisfaction the progress that has been achieved in this regard in Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America, as well as the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 48/71 of 1993 on freeing the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction, we call upon the parties concerned in the Middle East to take practical steps to achieve this objective in the interests of all peoples of the region. As a fundamental step in that direction, we call upon all States in the Middle East — especially Israel, the only State in the region that possesses nuclear weapons — accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to place

its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The acquisition of nuclear weapons by certain States without any international legal controls or guarantees that would deter those States from using such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States makes it necessary for us to call for the elaboration of international security guarantees for the non-nuclear-weapon States against their being the targets of the use or the threat of the use of such weapons. In this context, we call upon the Conference on Disarmament to elaborate a legally binding international convention that would provide for the non-nuclear-weapon States the necessary guarantees against the use or the threat of the use of such weapons. As a matter of fact, the only guarantee would be the elimination of those weapons in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/73, which stipulates that non-nuclear-weapon States should be given effective guarantees that ensure their security against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons from any quarter.

We support the adoption by the Security Council of a resolution that would embody clear and comprehensive guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as the adoption by the Security Council of such a resolution would be an important contribution towards the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and a major step towards the final and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

My country follows with satisfaction the ongoing progress in the area of banning nuclear tests, and we value the constructive initiatives that have been taken in that regard. We believe that the efforts to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty in all environments should be accelerated. Also the conclusion of a treaty that prohibits the production and stockpiling of nuclear-weapons-grade fissionable materials would contribute without a doubt to the efforts aiming at nuclear disarmament.

Although transparency is an important confidence-building measure, it will not be effective unless it is applied to all weapons categories, including weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery, and to high-tech military applications as well as conventional weapons of all types, including those produced nationally. It is necessary also that transparency should be applied in a balanced and non-selective manner and must serve national security interests. The register should also include the national military technologies of all States and their weapons procurement from their own national production.

In a few months' time the world will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. That occasion should be an incentive to the members of the Organization to dedicate their sincere efforts to enabling the peoples of the Earth to live in security, safety, peace, prosperity and stability.

Mr. Aung (Myanmar): I should like to begin by congratulating you most warmly, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. My delegation is fully confident that, with your great wisdom and wealth of experience in the field of disarmament, you will be able to guide the work of the First Committee to a successful conclusion. I assure you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation in the advancement of the work of the Committee. Our felicitations go to the other officers of the Committee also.

As we survey the international political scene at the beginning of the First Committee's work from the point of view of arms limitation and disarmament, we have mixed feelings. It is a picture of contrasts — bright spots in a few areas, but dark shadows still being cast over other regions.

We are indeed encouraged by the intensive negotiations that are taking place in the Conference on Disarmament with a view to the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. The Conference on Disarmament has made some progress towards developing the draft text of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. However, the draft text is still heavily bracketed. A very large portion, including the preamble and crucially important articles, such as those dealing with scope, verification, the organization and the entry into force, is still the subject of negotiations with a view to achieving consensus.

What is really important is the completion of a universal and internationally and effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty as expeditiously as possible — preferably before the 1995 Conference whose purpose is to review and consider extending the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We favour an evolutionary approach with regard to the verification system. The seismic verification technique should form the core of the comprehensive test-ban treaty verification system. Other non-seismic verification techniques, such as satellite photography and radioactivity, hydroacoustics and infrasound monitoring techniques can be incorporated and integrated as the technologies become sufficiently developed for practical application.

It is the aspiration of the international community that silence should for ever prevail at nuclear-test sites throughout the world. We seek the cessation of all nuclear-test explosions in all environments for all time — no less.

We are also pleased to note that the number of States ratifying the Convention on chemical weapons is increasing at an accelerating pace. As of today, 16 States have deposited their instruments of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We hope that the momentum in the ratification process will be maintained and extended so that the convention may enter into force at an early date. I am happy to inform the First Committee that the ratification process is well under way in my country. Myanmar is also taking an active part in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

One of the foremost security problems facing the international community today is that of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this context, it is of the utmost importance that the Treaty on the 1995 review and extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should have a successful outcome. In the view of my delegation, substantive progress in such crucial areas as those of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States and a ban on nuclear fissile material in all its aspects will contribute to the successful outcome of the Conference.

We regret that during its 1994 session, the Conference on Disarmament was unable to carry out serious negotiations on negative security assurances. This question has been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament for some 15 years, and the time is ripe for the development of the text of a treaty on the subject. The current post-cold-war international political climate is also right for making signal progress on negative security assurances. My delegation subscribes to the proposal that the question of positive security assurances should also be addressed together with that of negative assurances as there is a close interrelationship between the two issues. With nuclear-weapon States showing more flexibility and greater political will, it is indeed high time for us to redouble our efforts to achieve a legally binding instrument or arrangements on security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States.

Another area of the work of the Conference on Disarmament that is conspicuous by its absence of progress is that of the question of banning nuclear fissile material. A consensus draft mandate was still eluding the Conference on Disarmament at the close of its 1994 session. The very nature of the problem requires that the issue of stockpiles should also be addressed in dealing with the problem of banning nuclear fissile material. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to establish an ad hoc committee at the beginning of its 1995 session in order to carry out substantive negotiations on this question, and that, to this end, the United Nations General Assembly will be able to adopt an appropriate resolution, helpful to the Conference on Disarmament.

In the matter of transparency in armaments, the principle of undiminished security for every State should be respected. We believe that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms should be non-discriminatory and should be fashioned in such a manner as to encourage universal participation. In view of the nature and the complexity of the subject, it would be well-advised to adopt a gradual, step-by-step approach on this question.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: At the beginning of my statement, I wish first to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee on your election to collate the work of the Committee. We wish all members of the Committee every success in their work.

The discussion taking place in the Committee at this time is of particular importance to my country, for just a few days ago we were threatened once again with aggression from the Iraqi regime. Now that I have the opportunity in this important Committee to address a large number of issues such as disarmament, arms control, security and stability in the Arab world, and international peace and security, I should like to appeal to the Committee to step up efforts to give effect to international security. This Committee should not confine itself simply to addressing disarmament issues for Article 12 of the Charter empowers the First Committee to make recommendations and to lay down guidelines on general principles relating to international peace and security in order to promote deeper understanding of the concepts of preventive diplomacy, confidence-building and post-conflict peace-keeping measures. At earlier sessions the disarmament agenda included a number of urgent issues and some intractable problems but the consensus achieved at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly last year on a number of aspects of disarmament and arms limitation was a clear indication of the resolve of the international community to actively continue to strive after disarmament in its real sense.

The danger of the proliferation of conventional weapons is increasingly evident. The Gulf War provoked by the brutal Iraqi aggression against my country has shown that indiscriminate and intensive transfers of conventional weapons, especially from a country which is ill-intentioned against its neighbours, may cause instability in the region and provoke armed conflict with adverse effects on international peace and security. Consequently, the international community must shoulder the responsibility of taking effective steps to halt the intensive, indiscriminate and uncontrolled transfer of conventional weapons. In my delegation's view, the Register of Conventional Weapons is a key element in this context, all the more since that Register appears to offer grounds for optimism. The Secretary-General, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his report to this session on the work of the Organization, indicated that more than 80 countries, including the major suppliers and recipients now participate in the Register. In order for the Register to become an international mechanism that would promote international peace and security, much wider participation is needed. We agree with the Secretary-General that arms control and disarmament are factors that are linked organically with peace-keeping, peace-building and the consolidation of peace.

The number of States signatories to the chemical weapons Convention is over 150. However, four countries only have ratified the Convention. I should like to express our appreciation for the work of the Preparatory Committee of the chemical weapons Convention because the Committee has played a leading role in implementing the Convention banning the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. In order for that Convention to come into force as early as possible, States must take steps right away to speed up ratification. Kuwait is still anxious, because thus far Iraq has become a party to the Convention. The Iraqi regime, judging by its belligerent acts and attitudes, is still a threat to peace and security in the region. However, my country is convinced that the Security Council and the United Nations have the ability to force Iraq to fulfil its obligations under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of international legality.

Nuclear arms control and nuclear disarmament are among my country's top priorities in the area of disarmament. We welcomed the Agreement reached in 1991 between the United States and the Russian Federation on the limitation of offensive strategic weapons, and the Agreement reducing strategic offensive weapons in 1993. We are convinced that the proliferation of nuclear weapons poses a serious threat to international and regional peace and stability. The 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation system, and my delegation urges the States parties to that Convention to agree to its extension in 1995.

Kuwait has supported the idea that a denuclearized zone be set up in the Middle East. My country believes that pending the creation of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region, all countries of the region, without exception and without distinction, must refrain from the production, acquisition or stockpiling on nuclear weapons. My country proposes the following steps.

First, all the countries of the region should declare that they accept the setting up of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. That declaration should be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Second, all countries of the Middle East should declare that henceforth they will refrain from developing, producing and stockpiling weapons of mass destruction on their territories or on territories under their control. Third, all countries of the region should accept international inspection of their nuclear installations in conformity with the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and should allow the United Nations to play a role in developing an international monitoring and follow-up mechanism. Fourth, all countries of the region must accede to the NPT and to Conventions banning the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction. As Israel possesses an arsenal of nuclear weapons, it is invited to respond to the need to establish peace and stability in the Middle East. Fifth, military confidence-building arrangements should be drawn up on the basis of transparency and early warning to strengthen preventive diplomacy. Sixth, the permanent members of the Security Council should provide complete, effective and unconditional assurances to all States of the region. Seventh, disputes should be settled by peaceful means, including recourse to international jurisdiction, in order to avoid endangering international peace and security.

My country hopes that it will continue to play an effective role in the United Nations with the aim of conducting further consultations with countries of the region so that speedy steps may be taken to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, since that would heighten the possibilities of bringing peace to the region at a time when we are on the verge of a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The issues of peace, security, disarmament and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means should be

addressed on the basis of the fundamental principles of peaceful coexistence, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the non-use of force or threat of force at any time.

My country welcomes the progress made in the Middle East peace talks. We hope that further progress will be made on all tracks so that a new chapter, the chapter of peace, can begin in our region and so that we may take advantage of our economic and human resources in working for development.

Kuwait, by virtue of its geographic location, attaches particular importance to implementing the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. We support the view expressed by other countries that the Special Committee on that question should once again review the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace in the light of the changes that have taken place in the international scene after the end of the cold war. The Committee should focus on regional and international efforts aimed at guaranteeing peace and stability in the Indian Ocean.

There is a clear link between disarmament and development. Gigantic military expenditures hamper economic development and have an adverse effect on the scope and substance of international economic cooperation. Mankind, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, seems to be ready to turn away from conflict, and to divert the use of science and technology from destructive purposes to the well-being of mankind. Kuwait, beset as it is by many crises as a result of the brutal Iraqi aggression, is convinced that the international community and international relations should be governed by the principles of peace, democracy, freedom, sovereignty, equality between all countries and peaceful cooperation. Our experience of aggression is a bitter one; we hope it will be the last that we have to undergo.

The scale of that aggression had a global impact, proving that the security of the Gulf is closely linked to international security and that the only way to ensure stability in the Gulf is to ensure respect for the sovereignty of all States large and small, non-interference in their internal affairs and a strengthened role for the United Nations in accordance with the new approach based on preventive diplomacy. There is also a need to enhance the United Nations ability to foresee threats by means of a mechanism for predicting difficulties. It is important, moreover, to draw up practical plans to face up to any act of aggression so as to spare our region the ravages of war and achieve peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. Amar (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*): At the outset, my delegation extends its sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau. We are convinced that, under your leadership, the First Committee will be able to conclude its work successfully and effectively. Please accept the assurance of the delegation of Morocco that it will, throughout our work, do everything in its power to assist you in your task.

The delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco wishes to express its views on the item entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", pursuant to paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 48/81 of 16 December 1993.

Morocco welcomes the spirit of cooperation that prevailed at the negotiations with its partners in the European Union and wishes to reaffirm its full support for the statement of the Presidential Council of the Arab Maghreb Union adopted at the Tunis summit meeting in 1990. In this context, Morocco wishes to reaffirm also its readiness to continue to work, together with its Mediterranean partners, on the basis of prior achievements, to make the Mediterranean what it should always have been — a zone of peace, security and cooperation. In this connection, we wish to reiterate the proposal made by His Majesty King Hassan II during the meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Rome in December 1993. He offered to host, in Morocco, a ministerial meeting on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean. We also reiterate our pledge to respect the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to observe all the provisions of the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Morocco continues to be convinced of the need for redoubled efforts to eliminate tension and its causes and to resolve by peaceful means all the problems of the region on the basis of respect for the sovereignty of States. We believe that it is through a joint and integrated approach that we can take full advantage of all the latent potential of the countries on both shores of the Mediterranean to build and then consolidate relations of good-neighbourliness based on a cultural exchange in a spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding, aimed at laying lasting foundations for common security on the basis of political and economic partnership. We further believe that, if it is to be based on a common strategic outlook, the future configuration of the

Mediterranean — in all its political, economic, cultural, demographic or ecological dimensions — should promote a spirit of true partnership capable of addressing all the current or potential sources of tension. It should also reinforce cooperation in the light of such destabilizing phenomena as the various manifestations of terrorist activity or the prevailing imbalances between the two shores.

In Morocco's opinion, this common strategic view of peace and security in the Mediterranean can be adapted to the specific features of the western subregion of the Mediterranean basin in order to lay the foundations for inter-Mediterranean cooperation to promote sustainable development and reduce inequities in the social and economic fields between the two shores. This will lead to stability and shared prosperity.

Morocco continues to be convinced that strengthening security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region can make a decisive contribution to the establishment of a world order that respects the fundamental rights of States as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations. To that end, we believe that the opportunity to participate in existing machinery for security and cooperation, such as the CSCE, should be made available to countries of the southern shore in order to help them heighten their awareness and make an active contribution to the achievement of their own goals. Similarly, it is more important than ever before to establish a collective framework to address the concerns and aspirations of the coastal States and to give a new and bold impetus to their political, economic and cultural relations.

The Kingdom of Morocco is aware of the need to pursue dialogue and concerted effort in order to endow Mediterranean cooperation with adequate means to deal with the specific strategic conditions of the western subregion of the Mediterranean as an area for development and effective solidarity. To this end, the development of genuine partnership is essential for strengthening regional integration on the basis of the complementarity of the countries on both shores in economic and financial matters. The establishment of mechanisms to promote the inflow of productive investment, accompanied by effective partnership agreements and the transfer of technology, will help to promote inter-Mediterranean cooperation, allowing rational management of natural resources and the development of regional infrastructures.

On the question of disarmament, Morocco fully endorses the efforts undertaken within the framework of general and complete disarmament to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty and to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the context of the 1995 Conference with a view to bringing it up to date to making it non-discriminatory and truly universal. We believe that a global non-proliferation regime could be further strengthened by the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, by the dismantling of weapons of mass destruction, and by confidence-building between States. While we are aware of the limitations of the non-proliferation Treaty, Morocco calls upon all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to accede to it. Furthermore, we emphasize the need to strike a balance between a concern to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on the one hand, and the necessity of transferring technology for development on the other.

Nature has decreed that Morocco, together with Spain, be a custodian of the Strait of Gibraltar, a key to the Mediterranean. As a strategic point of primary importance, this Strait also has responsibility for security, particularly in the western Mediterranean. Nevertheless, despite its location at the extreme west of the Mediterranean, Morocco continues to be concerned about the region as a whole, which we regard as indivisible. For that reason Morocco has always been particularly and consistently interested in the eastern end of the Mediterranean, which is an area of potential conflict.

One year after the signing at Washington D.C. of the Declaration of Principles for limited autonomy in Gaza and Jericho between the PLO and Israel, the Kingdom of Morocco notes that the peace process in the Middle East is making steady headway in a manner that gives grounds for optimism for the first time in decades. We are firmly convinced that the dialectic of violence and warfare can never lead to lasting solutions. We therefore urge the parties in the Middle East to intensify their dialogue with a view to reaching an agreement that will make armed conflict and tragedy things of the past and will open a new era in the history of that strife-torn region, an era marked by peace, cooperation and solidarity.

In this context, from 13 October to 1 November 1994 at Casablanca the Kingdom of Morocco will act as host to the Economic Conference for the Middle East and North Africa, under the joint sponsorship of the United States of America and the Russian Federation. That Conference will draw up a blueprint for the economic and social development of this vast area and will undoubtedly represent a decisive stage in the process leading to the future development of peace, stability and economic growth in the region. It is being held two years after the Madrid

Conference and one year after the Washington Declaration, and it will be of extreme importance because it will provide the international community with an opportunity to gauge the determination of countries, international organizations and private investors to strengthen the peace process through regional cooperation and a common and balanced economic development. The Conference will also provide an opportunity to become aware of the tremendous potential of our region once peace has been restored.

The Conference will sketch out a map of an Arab world that is thinking and planning in terms of growth, development and prosperity to be shared by the largest possible number, an Arab world open to partnership and mutual exchanges, one that intends to base its future on a strategy of cooperation and not on a policy of withdrawal and confrontation.

Morocco's decision to act as host to this initial Conference on the region's economic future was taken in a spirit of responsibility and with clear awareness of what is at stake. It is an integral part of the policy that His Majesty King Hassan II has been pursuing for some years.

In the field of environment, Morocco would like to see a start in cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean in order to preserve the marine environment, to protect marine resources, to combat effectively marine pollution and to coordinate joint action in the case of natural or man-made disasters.

In the cultural sphere, Morocco reiterates its readiness to give further incentive to cultural exchanges between countries on both shores of the Mediterranean. In this connection we would reaffirm our conviction that dialogue between the civilizations of the two Mediterranean shores will enable us to give weight to the cultural heritage of both and will undoubtedly help to strengthen understanding and promote culture and *rapprochement* between the peoples of the region.

With regard to migration, the Kingdom of Morocco believes that this is an important factor for creating contacts, tolerance and coexistence between the cultures and religions of both shores of the Mediterranean. When Maghreb and European structures have been set up, this human dimension of strengthening security and cooperation in the Mediterranean will take on greater prominence and be given increased attention by host countries in order to improve the conditions for residence and assimilation for the Maghreb community.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Morocco cannot overemphasize the intimate relationship that exists between security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region and the need to establish an authentic partnership among the countries of both shores of the Mediterranean, our common sea.

Morocco, a country that welcomes dialogue between cultures and civilizations, encourages all initiatives that tend to bring closer together the two shores of the Mediterranean and to strengthen cooperation between them. In so doing we will be able to advance towards greater complementarity, solidarity and security, while consolidating peace and prosperity in the region.

Mr. Pak (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Allow me, first of all, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you on your election to preside over this important Committee. I believe that, under your able leadership and with your diplomatic skill, the Committee will successfully discuss all the items on the agenda.

Since the collapse of the cold war mankind has been filled with the expectation and hope that its desire for lasting peace would be realized. In reality, however, the world is still unstable because of the threat of war, in particular the threat of nuclear war.

Several agreements reached between the United States and the Russian Federation in the field of nuclear disarmament represent a positive step forward. However,they are only agreements and promises, which do not provide any assurance that mankind will be completely free from the threat of nuclear war.

The starting-point for achieving nuclear disarmament, in my view, rests in the position and attitude taken towards the existence of nuclear weapons. The unaltered intent to possess nuclear weapons presupposes the possible use of those nuclear weapons at any time. The nuclear-weapon States are trying to legalize the possession of nuclear weapons on the pretext that nuclear weapons are the means of pre-emptive attack and retaliation and a war deterrent.

Among the nuclear-weapon States there are some that do not rule out the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons under the pretext of a so-called flexible response, and other countries contend that both nuclear and conventional wars must be countered with nuclear weapons. To our regret, certain countries have even formally abandoned the principle of the non-use of nuclear weapons, one they have maintained for scores of years and even after the cold-war

era. Such negative developments are fostering increased mistrust among the nuclear-weapon States and thus spurring on the nuclear-arms race and obstructing the progress of meaningful discussions on general nuclear disarmament.

My delegation believes that the threat of nuclear war and the proliferation of nuclear weapons will never be removed unless the nuclear-weapon States give up their will to use nuclear weapons.

In this regard, I should like to make a few remarks on the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is the view of my delegation that the NPT should be aimed at realizing the complete abolition of nuclear weapons and the termination of the threat of nuclear war in the world. However, the NPT is an unequal and discriminatory Treaty that has accepted the legitimate right to the possession and use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States but imposed unreasonable non-proliferation obligations on the non-nuclear-weapon States.

During the past 25 years the Treaty has allowed the nuclear-weapon States to continue the mass production, stockpiling and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and has placed peaceful nuclear activities of non-nuclear-weapon States under pressure, blackmail and sanctions on the grounds that they are likely to develop nuclear weapons.

The proposed position on the unconditional and indefinite extension of the NPT is directed, therefore, towards legitimizing the indefinite monopoly and use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States and placing the world under the endless threat of nuclear war.

The nuclear-weapon States must provide unconditional negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and immediately conclude a treaty on the non-use of nuclear weapons and a total ban on the production and use of those weapons. They should also set a timetable for a complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

These steps will be the first in the process of rendering the existence of nuclear weapons on our planet meaningless; they will have a positive effect on the ongoing deliberations on the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted the resolution — 46/36 L — on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. At that time, many of us expressed our hope that the Register of Conventional Arms would encourage the realization of disarmament by controlling and reducing transfers of conventional arms, including transfers of weapons of mass destruction, and by building confidence among Member States. But it is questionable whether the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has been operating in favour of confidence-building and disarmament. The export of weapons has not abated at all and, worse still, modern weapons are concentrated in areas of conflicts or potential conflicts, thus aggravating the situation in those areas. All these facts indicate that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms advertises modern and sophisticated weapons and the trade in those weapons, thus creating mistrust among Member States and triggering an arms race to expedite the acquisition of arms. To live up to its desired purpose, the Register should contain such measures as a ban on the export of weapons and the registration and withdrawal of weapons and military facilities deployed abroad.

The Register may have a positive or a negative effect on disarmament, depending on the region. Therefore, it cannot be said that the Register is of universal significance. Transparency is necessary for confidence-building and disarmament, not for its own sake. Transparency in destabilized areas will foster mistrust, encourage an arms race and serve the arms trade, rather than building confidence.

The region of north-east Asia still remains unstable, owing to the continuation of a cold-war policy on the part of certain countries even after the collapse of the structure of East-West confrontation and the cold war. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, reinforcement of armed forces and large-scale military exercises have become usual, and disputes and confrontation are being aggravated in the region.

The Korean peninsula is the most unstable area in the world; there, huge armed forces have been deployed against each other along the Military Demarcation Line. Peace and security in the region of north-east Asia and the rest of the world are directly linked to developments on the Korean peninsula. The fundamental resolution of the nuclear issue is vital to the defusing of tensions and the establishment of a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is a political and military one to be resolved bilaterally by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, in view of the background of its origin,

nature and substance. The nuclear issue was originated by the United States, which has deployed nuclear weapons in south Korea and has made constant nuclear threats against us while creating nuclear suspicion. Therefore, this issue cannot be resolved by technical methods such as inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). And it is self-evident that we cannot tolerate leaving such an important military and political issue in the hands of the IAEA, which has become even more partial in the discharge of its duties, with prejudice against my country.

It is from this point of view that the DPRK has maintained its consistent position that the nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations between the DPRK and the United States of America.

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great leader of the Korean people, when he met Mr. Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States, in June this year, said that confidence-building between the DPRK and the United States of America would be vital to the resolution of the nuclear issue, and that the nuclear issue should be settled through dialogue and negotiations between those two countries. At the third round of talks, held in Geneva last August, the DPRK and the United States of America, whose relations have not been normal, reached an agreement on the clear final objectives for the resolution of nuclear and other outstanding issues.

The Government delegations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America signed today in Geneva — at the second session of the third round of talks, which began on 23 September — an Agreed Framework between the two countries for the full solution of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula.

The respected Supreme Commander, Comrade Kim Jong Il, Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, instructed the Head of the DPRK delegation to the talks between the DPRK and the United States of America to sign that Agreed Framework. The Agreed Framework adopted at the talks is an important document by which the DPRK and the United States of America commit themselves to what they should do to resolve the nuclear issue, such as the replacement of the DPRK's graphite-moderated reactors with light-water reactors, the normalization of political and economic relations between the two countries, the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the establishment of peace and security there, and the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation system.

The Agreed Framework is a milestone in the solution of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, as it defines in a package the measures to be taken by the two sides. The Agreed Framework sufficiently and satisfactorily reflects the consistent stand of the DPRK on the settlement of the nuclear issue and its active initiatives to that end. When it is smoothly implemented, it will greatly contribute to the removal of hostile relations and to confidence-building between the DPRK and the United States, and the so-called nuclear suspicion will finally disappear.

However, the South Korean authorities, being extremely irritated by, and uncomfortable with, the progress of the talks between the DPRK and the United States of America, tried to put the brakes on the talks, begging the United States of America not to make concessions. Nevertheless, the talks between the DPRK and the United States of America proceeded and have come to a successful conclusion. As a Korean proverb says, "Dogs bark, but the train moves on."

I therefore urge the South Korean authorities and certain countries which have not been in favour of a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue not to hinder the implementation of the Agreed Framework adopted today in Geneva.

Just as Rome was not built in a day, mistrust between the two countries, which has lasted for nearly half a century, cannot be removed in one or two days. If the DPRK and the United States of America build confidence free from the concept of confrontation, and implement the Agreed Framework, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula will surely be resolved.

An important element in defusing tensions and bringing about peace on the Korean peninsula would be the replacement of the Korean Armistice Agreement by a peace agreement and the establishment of a new peace arrangement instead of the current armistice mechanism.

The Korean Armistice Agreement, signed in the 1950s, is a provisional step that envisages the suspension of military actions between the belligerent parties and the subsequent conversion of the Armistice Agreement into a peace agreement.

The Armistice Agreement states, in paragraph 60 of article IV, that, in order to help establish a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula, a political conference between the two sides should be held at a high level. However, such a

political conference has yet to be convened, and this unstable armistice has been in effect for a long time.

Though the Armistice Agreement and armistice mechanism have existed for nearly half a century, they have been nominal and insubstantial, having failed to prevent or exercise restraint over the introduction of nuclear weapons into Korea and the reinforcing of armaments from outside, military build-up and large-scale war exercises.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has presented a detailed proposal to the United States for the two countries to begin negotiations on an agreement for a lasting peace to replace the outdated armistice system, and subsequently it took the practical step of establishing a new security system on the Korean peninsula.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China, parties to the Armistice Agreement, withdrew their delegations from the Military Armistice Commission, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea established a representative office of the Korean People's Army in Panmunjom, which provides a mechanism for resolving questions of peace and security through negotiation.

As non-aggression has been declared in the Agreement on reconciliation, non-aggression, cooperation and exchange between the north and the south, which was concluded in 1992, the establishment of a new peace agreement will legally guarantee peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

In this regard, we expect the United Nations to pay due attention to the fact that the flag of the United Nations, as a party belligerent to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is still waving opposite our flag on the Military Demarcation Line. We also expect the United Nations to fulfil its role in ensuring a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula, since it allowed its name to be used when the Armistice Agreement was signed.

If the United Nations fails to correct what it had done in the past in dealing with the Korean issue, its credibility will be questioned by smaller countries, which make up the majority of the United Nations membership.

A lasting peace and security for the Korean peninsula can be guaranteed only when the country is reunified.

The Government and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have long exerted every effort to achieve the reunification of the country on the basis of such proposals for reunification as the three principles of independence, peaceful reunification and great national unity; the proposal for the establishment of the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo; and the Ten-Point Programme for Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Country's Reunification.

The Ten-Point Programme for Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Country's Reunification, which was put forward in April 1993 by Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great leader of the Korean people, is a programmatic guideline for ending division and confrontation and achieving the independent and peaceful reunification of the country.

The Ten-Point Programme states that the north and the south should establish a pan-national, unified State that represents all parties and all groups from the entire nation, including people from all walks of life, while leaving the two systems and governments of the north and the south intact. This pan-national, unified State should be a confederation in which the two regional governments of the north and the south are represented equally — an independent, peaceful and non-aligned neutral State that does not side with any great Power. The establishment of a pan-national, unified State based on confederation will naturally resolve the issue of a peace settlement by allowing for denuclearization, disarmament and the defusing of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

Promotion of a north-south dialogue is a key factor in realizing the independent and peaceful reunification of the country.

The major stumbling-blocks to humanitarian exchanges, dialogue and contacts between north and south are south Korea's so-called "National Security Law", which defines its fellow countrymen as enemies, and the concrete wall, a symbol of division and confrontation. Therefore, all the legal and physical barriers must be removed at an early date if we are to achieve our goals of free travel and contacts, cooperation and exchanges between the north and the south and national unity. Not only is this the unanimous demand of all the people of Korea and of the world: it also goes along with the trend of the times.

We will make every effort to remove the obstacles and difficulties that remain in the way of national reunification

and to achieve that reunification by promoting a dialogue between the north and the south.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. Chairman, allow me to convey to you, Sir, and to the other officers of the Committee our congratulations on your election. Your outstanding record on the regional, national and international levels does honour and lends prestige to this Committee and is a source of pride to your country and to Latin America as a whole. Your wisdom, your experience, your talents, your moral rectitude and your extraordinary professional skills make us confident that the work of the First Committee will be successful. I need hardly say that you may count on our most enthusiastic support.

The countries of the Central American isthmus — Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama — on whose behalf I have the honour to address the Committee, firmly support the concerted endeavours of the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament to attain the goal of general and complete disarmament based on effective international control, pursuant to the resolutions of the General Assembly and in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

In the general debate at the beginning of this session there was a clear expression of the political will of the Central American States to see advantage taken of the existing international climate to boost multilateral negotiations designed to bring about specific agreements on priority disarmament issues including, most important, those relating to disarmament and development in existing international relations.

There is no doubt that world public opinion shares the widespread aspiration for the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons in all environments for all time as a basic prerequisite for complete disarmament and the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We are therefore very grateful for the multinational negotiations on the preparation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a matter which is now before the Conference on Disarmament thanks to the wise and dedicated guidance of the Mexican Ambassador, Miguel Marín Bosch.

Furthermore, priority should be given to other topics on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, such as cessation of the nuclear arms race, nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war, security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons, measures to prevent an arms race in outer space and measures relating to new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, including radiological weapons.

The international community attaches great importance to the issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in all their aspects and to the Secretary-General's report on the subject.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/75 C, the report was transmitted to a representative intergovernmental group of experts for its consideration and suggestions with regard to further study of the question by the international community in various multilateral disarmament forums.

This question, which is on the agenda of this session, should be the subject of in-depth consideration, at an appropriate time, by the Conference on Disarmament which, in accordance with the unanimous decision of the General Assembly, is the international community's sole multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament matters.

Turning to the preparations for the 1995 Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we agree with the Chairman, Ambassador Luis Valencia Rodríquez, that although this is a matter that is not normally dealt with directly by the Committee, our work can help to create a favourable environment for the negotiations on the subject.

In the same vein, as the Chairman has informed us, the work done by the Conference on Disarmament in negotiating a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should be moved forward.

It is increasingly clear that the effective creation of denuclearized zones is a first necessary step towards achieving the ultimate elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Thanks to the visionary efforts of the champion of disarmament, Alfonso Garcia Robles, our region now has the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which bans nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. With the recent accession of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, together with its ratification by Saint Kitts and Nevis and the announced accession by Cuba, the Treaty will shortly come into full effect, thereby giving Latin America the historic status of being the first fully denuclearized zone in the world.

We must acknowledge the useful work done by the Conference on Disarmament with respect to issues of transparency in armaments. Effective operation of the Register of Conventional Arms is essential in preventing illicit imports and exports and their negative effects on the maintenance of peace as well as on efforts to curb international crime. It is clear however that the United Nations Secretariat lacks the necessary resources for the proper operation and maintenance of the Register. It is also clear that, although certain countries are not in favour of the continuance of the Register, its usefulness in our turbulent world cannot be denied since it is an important tool in our effort to eradicate the illicit arms traffic associated with destabilizing activities such as terrorism, drug trafficking and common crimes. We believe, further, that to some extent the Register will help to give effect to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects as well as to Protocol I on Non-Detectable Fragments, to Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, and to Protocol III on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons.

With the participation of the Group of Experts, the work under way on measures to give effect to mechanisms designed to verify strict compliance with the provisions of the Corvention prohibiting bacteriological and toxin weapons should, in the view of the Central American States, be given the highest priority. At the same time, all States and, in particular, the most developed States should for many reasons help to promote universal accession to the biological weapons Convention and to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction so that these instruments may enter into force as early as possible. We expect good results from the work of the Preparatory Commission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons under the chairmanship of Ambassador Marín Bosch.

The suspension of the export of anti-personnel land-mines should in our view go beyond a moratorium and should involve the suspension of exports, transparency on the acquisition of such mines and similar devices. Mankind faces an appalling threat from the brutal fact that there are still as many as 85 million land-mines still in place in all parts of the world, especially in rural areas and that the deaths, injuries and maimings caused by them entail considerable human and economic costs.

The General Assembly, which addressed this issue last year, should press for the adoption of all appropriate measures to suspend exports of anti-personnel land-mines. The resolution that will be adopted in this regard will implicitly convey to the States responsible for the laying of such mines the message of public opinion regarding their legal and moral obligation to help to bear the costs of, and to work directly with, the technical personnel and specialized equipment in locating and removing such devices, which cause injury and infringe the intrinsic human right of the civilian population to enjoy peace, calm and security in all their daily activities.

Lastly, I wish to state that our countries are in favour of convening a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. In this post-cold-war era it is fully justified to take stock of the progress achieved and of the steps which need to be taken by consensus in the area of general disarmament.

As a leader from our region stated in the Assembly:

> "Central America is emerging, still licking its wounds, from the savage blows of two decades of deep crisis and bloodshed. A quarter of a million dead is the huge and tragic price that Central Americans paid for the cold war. Billions of dollars were poured into destruction and military confrontation between brothers. Now, unfortunately, only scant resources are being invested in building new democracies and new economies.
>
> "This is a challenge for Central Americans and the international community alike." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 6th meeting, p. 2)*

In this context, we should remember that the end of the cold war was accompanied by fresh opportunities to enjoy a "peace dividend", provided that substantive progress was made in the area of disarmament. This, logically, would give a boost not only to the economies of the developing countries, but also to efforts to solve the financial crisis of the United Nations, which has been undermining the Organization's ability to function and which was so dramatically described by the Secretary-General in his address to the General Assembly on 12 October 1994.

The Secretary-General's last report on the relationship between disarmament and development — document A/49/476 — refers to the contrast between the high levels

of spending on armaments and the relatively modest resources required to meet such global needs as health, education and ecological security. As a result, those who assert that the world is over-armed and underdeveloped are not far wrong. In this post-war period, it is essential to make deep cuts in military expenditures and to make efforts to address the redeployment, rechannelling or conversion of such resources to non-military uses — though we understand that this process is fraught with obstacles and difficulties.

There is a need for critical examination of the whole question in order to devise guidelines and courses of action for our future activities in this area. This, in the view of the Secretary-General, might take place at the World Summit for Social Development to be held in 1995 in Copenhagen, which offers our countries hopes for a more promising future.

Mr. Seydou (Niger) *(interpretation from French):* It is rather late, but since this is the first time I have spoken in the First Committee I would be remiss if I failed to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the other officers of the Committee, the congratulations of the delegation of Niger on your election and on the very effective way in which you are directing the work of the First Committee.

The end of East-West antagonism unquestionably provides the international community with a unique opportunity to make significant progress in the field of disarmament and arms reduction. Nevertheless, if we do not seize this unique opportunity, we will find ourselves in the anachronistic situation of a world that is safe from worldwide confrontation but at the same time incapable of ensuring, in many parts of the world, the maintenance of peace and security.

The situations in Rwanda, in Somalia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to cite only those few, are striking illustrations of how complex the question of international security is, but they also demonstrate how necessary it is that these questions be taken up in an integrated and global context.

Niger welcomes the progress already achieved by the nuclear Powers in reducing their nuclear arsenals in recent years. The negotiations undertaken by the nuclear Powers, as well as the agreements and treaties they have concluded, are undoubtedly a victory for all mankind.

Nevertheless, they are not a substitute for a system of collective security which, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, should involve and concern all States.

The Convention on chemical weapons and the one on biological weapons bear witness to the results that can be attained by the international community in outlawing weapons of mass destruction. For that reason, my country, Niger, pays great attention to the questions to be taken up by the review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held next year. In this connection, my country welcomes the progress achieved in the preparatory meetings, and hopes that the various obstacles that still stand in the way can be overcome in time to make it possible for the ideal of the indefinite extension of this important Treaty to be realized.

To do so, it would be particularly valuable if the efforts at reduction now under way were accelerated to a significant degree and within reasonable deadlines. It would be useful also if rapid progress were made towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty. In this connection, the unilateral moratoriums proclaimed by certain nuclear Powers should be maintained. Likewise, it is high time for those Powers that still conduct nuclear tests to put a stop to them.

Finally, it seems quite legitimate to my delegation that the negative assurances that have so long been sought by the non-nuclear-weapon States that have committed themselves not to acquire such weapons should be given to them in order to dispel the climate of suspicion regarding a matter the fortunate outcome of which would benefit all mankind.

Niger also believes that the universal nature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should be studied and preserved and, in this connection I should like to appeal to those States that have not yet acceded to that Treaty to do so in the interests of peace and confidence-building in the regions to which they belong and, more generally, in the area of international peace and security.

I should like to welcome the efforts being made throughout the world to establish zones of peace and, more specifically, the fact that a treaty has been drafted concerning a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. The signing and the prompt implementation of that treaty would be a major contribution to the building of confidence among the countries of the continent, which would then be able to

devote their full energies to the priority tasks of development.

The question of conventional weapons is still a matter of major concern, particularly since the fear of confrontation between the blocs has given way to a plethora of regional conflicts that endanger the stability, the peace and the security of the regions affected. It is in order to help resolve that problem that Niger supports the opening of the Register of Conventional Arms, to which it contributes by regularly providing information.

My country remains seriously concerned about the danger represented by anti-personnel mines, and will therefore support any initiative aimed at establishing reliable control over these death-dealing devices, including their production, their transfer and their use.

My country highly appreciates the support given by the Secretary-General of our Organization to the initiative taken by the President of the Republic of Mali regarding the control of illicit trafficking in small arms, which is occurring in our sub-region. We would be very pleased to cooperate closely with the mission that is shortly to be sent to Niger as part of this initiative.

In concluding this brief statement, I should like to emphasize that education on disarmament matters should also be encouraged, because it is conducive to forging a better understanding of the concerns of disarmament and peace. Niger believes that means should be made available to the disarmament offices, and particularly the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which is situated in Togo.

Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee, and to wish you every success. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya attaches great importance to questions of disarmament and international security in the belief that the very existence of various types of weapons of mass destruction poses a grave threat to international peace and security. Through participation in the work of international conferences and meetings devoted to such questions, the Jamahiriya contributes to the formulation of many a resolution and plays an active role in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee of the 1995 review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

We hope that the Committee will reach an understanding that takes into account the concerns of all States parties to the Treaty with regard to the question of extending the Treaty. In this connection, my delegation wishes to reiterate the fact that we see a number of difficulties regarding any indefinite extension of the Treaty because of the following substantive reasons:

First, the continuing security imbalance in the Middle East region which arises from Israel's possession of a nuclear capability;

Second, the disparity in the positions of the Arab States and Israel in adherence to the non-proliferation regime as reflected in accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the conclusion of a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);

Third, the absence of any credible security guarantees to the non-nuclear States because nuclear-weapon States have not fully carried out their commitments in the field of effective measures of nuclear-weapon disarmament;

Fourth, the lack of any progress in establishing a non-proliferation regime in the Middle East, including the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction; and,

Fifth, the restrictive export policies still applied by the exporters of nuclear technical equipment for peaceful purposes to the developing countries that are parties to the Treaty.

My country wishes once again to welcome General Assembly resolution 48/7 adopted at the last session on assistance in mine clearance. We support the measures called for by that resolution so that the international community may get rid of these mines and other unexploded devices.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is one of the States which still face this serious problem with all its grave dimensions because of the minefields and booby traps planted in its soil and along its shores during the Second World War. When the combatants departed from our country they left behind vast minefields and booby-trapped areas which they did not clear, assisting in clearing or

provide any maps indicating the location of those land-mines and booby-traps that have continued to obstruct our agricultural and developmental programmes and make them more costly, both materially and in terms of the loss of lives of thousands of human beings, and of cattle.

The report in document A/49/357/Add.1, dated 20 September 1994, details the great damage and grave losses suffered by my country in various sectors. We call upon the States that planted those mines and booby traps to cooperate with us by providing us with the maps that show their locations and to assist us in getting rid of them, in implementation of the resolutions of this Organization and other regional organizations. They should also pay us proper compensation for the human, economic, material and ecological damage they have caused.

My country supports all international efforts aimed at reducing the military budgets of all States big and small, and the destruction of all arsenals of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The financial resources thus saved should be channelled to assist the third world which is in dire need of such assistance to raise its standards of living and develop its economies and societies.

In this context, my country has adopted a number of tangible and concrete measures. It has abolished its conventional army and demobilized thousands of military personnel, employing them instead in production centres so that they may contribute to the development and strengthening of our national economy. This has led to a great reduction in our military expenditure, which is now limited to the minimum required for legitimate self-defence.

This unique measure is an example that should be followed by all States that have the will to create a world of peace, security and stability. Then we will no longer talk of a reduction in military budgets or of transparency or of other matters related to disarmament. By so doing, we will have taken effective steps towards removing all threats and causes of terror which arise from the existence of all types of weapons of mass destruction and will have paved the way towards the emergence of a more peaceful and secure world.

My country takes great interest in strengthening security, stability and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. We welcome all efforts aimed at transforming the Mediterranean into a region of security and cooperation. However, these aspirations are frustrated by the continued presence of foreign fleets and bases which pose a threat to the peace and sovereignty of the region's coastal States. Proof of this, if proof is needed, is in the continuous provocations against my country by the American Sixth Fleet stationed in the region. These provocations culminated in overt American aggression, with the help of Britain, against Libyan cities in 1986, an aggression which claimed the lives of many innocent civilians.

As the continued presence of these fleets and bases still poses a great threat to the security and peace of the Mediterranean States, we call for the withdrawal of such fleets and the closing down of such military bases so that the States of the region may live in peace and security and usher in an era of economic, cultural and environmental cooperation in the interests of the peoples of the region and of all peace-loving countries of the world.

My country welcomes the accession by the States that have recently acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and calls on countries that have not yet acceded to the Treaty to do so as soon as possible. My country also supports the conclusion of a treaty declaring Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone, since that would enhance international peace and security.

We fully support the international community's call for a ban on nuclear tests. If that aim is achieved, we will definitely have taken an important step towards ridding our world of the nightmare of nuclear war. We welcome the start of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament to formulate the rules and controls for a treaty banning nuclear tests. At the same time all countries of the world should be given a chance to participate effectively in the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament because that would have a positive effect and achieve full equality amongst all States of the world, big and small, without distinction.

As for transforming the Middle East into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, we welcome that very much indeed, but wish to draw the attention of the international community to the fact that this dream, noble as it may seem, will not be possible to realize unless the whole world bravely stands up to the Israelis, who possess a large arsenal of nuclear weapons, in excess of 200 warheads. Even if the Israelis accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), this will not be sufficient to transform the Middle East into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. As we have pointed out before, the Israelis possess a large arsenal of nuclear weapons that threaten the peace and security of all the countries of the region and regrettably, the Israelis receive

every support and encouragement from the major Western Powers, in particular the United States of America, which pursues a policy of double standards. This leads us to wonder whether the international community is serious in dealing with this issue especially when we recall that certain countries, led by the United States of America, raised a hue and cry over a small pharmaceutical, and, I repeat, pharmaceutical plant in my country intended for the production of medicines, while those same Powers turn a blind eye to the means of mass destruction possessed by the Israelis. What sort of justice is this?

As for the so-called peace process in the Middle East, my country wishes to warn the Jews before the Arabs that this peace will not endure because it is not just and not definitive. Those who encourage them to seek such peace want to get rid of the Jews before the Arabs, whereas we, who want the Jews to live in peace, wish to point out that peace between them and the Palestinians cannot be just or lasting unless it is based on the establishment of a democratic State in which Jews and Arabs alike live together as equals, following the example of the just, democratic and non-racialist solution achieved in South Africa. Also such peace will not exist unless the Israeli nuclear arsenal, which threatens all the countries of the region, is destroyed. That arsenal makes any peace achieved under such condition fragile indeed and dooms it to failure, as it would be a peace of surrender and of bowing to a *fait accompli*. History is full of examples of the failure of *fait accompli* policies to generate durable peace. We in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wish to proclaim this fact to all reasonable Jews and Arabs alike and to all reasonable people the world over and to warn them, before it is too late, that whatever is based on falsehood will never endure.

Programme of work

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin the second phase of its work — "Structured discussion of specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach on disarmament and international security agenda items" — on Tuesday, 25 October.

As members will recall, at our organizational meeting on Thursday, 13 October, I stated that, with the assistance and cooperation of the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat, I would provide members of the Committee with the necessary information on each subject and the time allocated for its consideration well in advance.

I would now like to inform the Committee that, together with the other officers of the Committee, I carefully reviewed the issues involved in this matter at the meeting held on Thursday, 20 October. I am now in a position to present for the Committee's consideration and approval a structured programme encompassing all the most important topics listed in operative paragraph 2 of resolution 48/87 of 16 December 1993.

The programme for the second phase of the Committee's work has already been distributed to representatives.

It is my intention to take up these 10 topics, as reflected in the timetable before the Committee for consideration, one by one, beginning with the discussion of the first topic, "Nuclear weapons", on the afternoon of Tuesday, 25 October, and then to move on to the others in sequence. In this regard I would also like to say that, to the extent possible, sufficient flexibility will be maintained in dealing with these issues during our informal discussions. In order to utilize fully and constructively our time and the conference services and resources available for the second phase of our work, I suggest that, as soon as the consideration of a particular topic is concluded, the Committee should, if time permits, proceed immediately to the consideration of, and exchange of views on, the next topic listed in the timetable now before the Committee for its consideration.

I would also like to point out that no formal list of speakers will be drawn up, precisely because this is to be an informal discussion of specific subjects. Those delegations wishing to take part in the informal discussions are requested to indicate at the meeting their wish to make a statement. Alternatively, if they prefer, they may convey that wish to the Secretary at an appropriate time.

I would like to inform the Committee that, pursuant to discussions held in the Bureau, the Secretariat has been asked to make the necessary arrangements so that interested non-governmental organizations may place written materials on tables outside the conference room in which the Committee is meeting so that delegations may pick them up if they wish.

We shall now entertain comments or observations on the programme of work.

Mr. Moradi (Islamic Republic of Iran): We have no problem with the Chairman's informal paper. We just want

to express appreciation for his efforts, and those of the Secretariat, in providing us with this paper.

I simply seek clarification with regard to how the Committee intends to proceed with its deliberations on each item; whether you, Mr. Chairman, want to make a final assessment on the basis of the views expressed by Member States; and whether the views expressed by delegations will be reflected in the Committee's records. I should appreciate your shedding some light on the way in which the Committee will proceed in respect of these matters.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* In response to the point that has just been raised, I should like to say that the Committee is certainly master of its own procedures and its own decisions. The various topics listed in resolution 48/78 will be considered informally, and in each case the Committee will be able to come to a determination in respect of any point a delegation raises. Of course, the Committee will be able at any stage to establish the broad guidelines that it wishes to follow, and it may at any time initiate a draft resolution or any other such measure that it deems appropriate.

If there are no further comments I shall take it that the proposal has been accepted.

I wish to make it clear that we are talking about informal consultations, of which there are no records. Informal consultations should enable delegations to ascertain the level of agreement on each issue that is before the Committee for consideration.

I take it that the Committee accepts the proposed programme for the second phase of our work.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/49/PV.9

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

First Committee

9th Meeting

Monday, 24 October 1994, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia Rodriguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Ngo Quang Xuan (Viet Nam) *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, I should first of all like to congratulate you warmly on your election as Chairman. I should also like to congratulate the other Committee officers. I should like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's highest esteem to Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, the previous Chairman, for his outstanding contribution to the Committee's work at its last session.

I assure you of the full cooperation of our delegation in securing success in the Committee's proceedings.

Last year we continued to witness enormous changes at the world and regional levels, which have had a tremendous impact on every country and region. Mankind continues to face as many opportunities as challenges, which requires a common effort to support and promote the cause of peace and cooperation, to ensure the prosperity of all countries and of the concert of nations.

We are pleased to note that progress has been made in the search for solutions to conflicts in the Middle East and South Africa. The threat of a world war, of extermination, is receding, although many serious ethnic, religious and territorial conflicts continue or have flared up once more. The stockpiling of nuclear weapons and the risks posed by the illicit proliferation of fissile material continue to threaten all countries, large or small, and deserve the special attention of the international community.

This shows that the end of the cold war has not eliminated the threat to mankind posed by both nuclear and conventional weapons. This is why general and complete disarmament under effective international control remains our ultimate goal and would help ensure the security of all nations.

In this connection, we are pleased to note the positive developments that have taken place since our last session, including: the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty; the strengthening of the biological weapons Convention decided upon by the States parties at the Special Conference at Geneva from 19 to 30 September 1994; and the accession of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Georgia to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The chemical weapons Convention signed in early 1993 at Paris, the biological weapons Convention and the NPT are the fruits of the international community's multilateral efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction.

Undoubtedly, the Non-Proliferation Treaty has to date been the most important international instrument on nuclear disarmament, as almost 165 States have acceded to it, including all five nuclear Powers. It should indeed be extended. However, we must emphasize that its discriminatory nature is undeniable and that some articles must be improved to make it more relevant.

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This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

With regard to the extension of the Treaty, Viet Nam supports the proposal put forward by the non-aligned countries at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the review and extension Conference, held at Geneva from 12 to 16 September 1994: that the extension of the NPT should be closely linked to measures to eliminate nuclear weapons. These measures comprise the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, of a treaty prohibiting the production and stockpiling of fissile material, security assurances to non-nuclear States against the use of nuclear weapons and the access of non-nuclear-weapon States to nuclear technology and equipment for peaceful purposes.

Confidence-building measures are indispensable and cannot be disassociated from the process of building peace, security and development. In several regions, efforts have been under way to find ways and means to encourage cooperation for peace, stability and development on the basis of mutual understanding and respect, with the consent of all countries concerned.

Viet Nam is entirely aware that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones was one of the prerequisites for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We are pleased to note that the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/71, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, by consensus, and that the Latin American and Caribbean region has become the first nuclear-weapon-free zone following the recent ratification of the Treaty of Tlatelolco by Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Saint Lucia and the announcement by Cuba that it intends to follow suit. We also welcome the efforts of African countries to ensure that Africa too should become a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We hope to see the establishment of several other nuclear-free zones.

Viet Nam's credo of friendship with all countries has led it to follow an open foreign policy, a policy that has been characterized by the diversification and multilateralism of its foreign relations. In this foreign policy, Viet Nam gives top priority to enhancing friendly relations and cooperation with countries of the region. We are pleased to note that our foreign policy is in complete harmony with the general trend throughout the world, and specifically in South East Asia, where trust and cooperation are replacing the distrust and confrontation which had existed over the decades.

Viet Nam advocates that countries in the region should work on what they have in common, settle their differences and solve disputes, including those relating to the Eastern Sea through bilateral and multilateral negotiations among the parties directly concerned without the threat or use of force. The Regional Forum held by the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the security of the region, held at Bangkok last July, with the participation of 18 countries from the region and elsewhere, is an additional confidence-building measure.

These are the common denominators contributing to ensuring peace, stability and cooperation in the region and to the building of a South-East Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

Never before has our Organization been called upon to participate in so many important, difficult and complex duties in all areas — political and economic as well as military. On the threshold of a great event, the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995, we must ensure that the Organization will be able to perform its global role in response to the expectations of the entire international community in resolving the primary problems of the survival of mankind, as well as in preparation for our voyage towards the new millennium.

Mr. Bhatia (India): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that, under your wise and able guidance, our deliberations this year will be successful. We would also like to pay warm tribute to Ambassador von Wagner of Germany for his distinguished stewardship of this Committee. I assure you of the full support of my delegation in accomplishing your duties. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the newly elected officers of the Committee.

Since the beginning of the present decade, this Committee has heard many statements welcoming the end of the cold war and the resulting transformation of the political landscape. No doubt this has been a remarkable development. The diminishing of the confrontation between the two power blocs gives hope for forging a consensus for a new international security order. During the last five years, we have also heard many speakers talk about the window of opportunity that has opened for pursuing new disarmament initiatives with a view to strengthening international peace and security. We believe that we have yet to exploit this window of opportunity.

Certainly some developments have taken place in recent years. The bilateral Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II) between the United States and the Russian Federation deserves to be welcomed. The recent understanding that both countries will try to implement the Treaty in an accelerated mode is particularly heartening. But this will still leave the two countries holding approximately 7,000 strategic weapons, each 10 to 50 times the size of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. We are therefore convinced that much more needs to be done in order to achieve the objective set out in the very first, resolution adopted by this Committee, General Assembly resolution 1 (I):

> "the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction".

We have successfully created norms against biological and chemical weapons and have further strengthened these with legal treaties that enjoy widespread adherence. Unfortunately, the international community has been unable to do the same with regard to nuclear weapons.

We believe that the international community stands at a critical moment in history. The decisions that we take will shape the destiny of the world in the coming century. India remains committed to participating in all global initiatives that can lead to the attainment of the objective of a world free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. During Prime Minister Narasimhe Rao's visit to Washington in May, he and President Clinton issued a joint statement offering their strong support for efforts towards the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and towards the progressive reduction in numbers of such weapons, with the goal of their total elimination. Later in the year, during Prime Minister Narasimhe Rao's visit to Moscow, he and President Yeltsin issued a joint declaration reiterating their commitment to all measures aimed at the complete and universal elimination of weapons of mass destruction. These are positive signals. We have therefore decided to introduce a new draft resolution in this Committee, recalling the pledge we made in 1946 and recommending that the subject of the elimination of nuclear weapons be taken up with the utmost priority, as it merits. The Conference on Disarmament seems to us to be the most appropriate forum for taking up consideration of this subject.

In 1988, at the fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third special session devoted to disarmament, India put forward an action plan for ushering in a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world order (A/S-15/12, annex I). It is a source of some satisfaction that some of the steps suggested in the action plan now enjoy consensus. The negotiations on a chemical-weapons Convention have been concluded, and 157 countries have already become signatories. An Ad Hoc Committee was set up by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva at the beginning of the year for negotiations leading to a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. At the last session of the General Assembly, consensus was reached on negotiations aimed at prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes.

India has played an active role in the negotiations on a comprehensive test ban. We believe that such a treaty should ban nuclear tests by all States, in all environments and for all time. Only such a treaty can inhibit proliferation in both the horizontal and the vertical dimensions. The verification regime, like the treaty itself, must be universal in its application and non-discriminatory in character. Ambassador Marin Bosch of Mexico deserves our compliments for his tireless efforts as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee to move the process forward. We hope that the negotiations can be concluded at the earliest possible time.

On the question of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear-weapons purposes, India was and remains in favour of setting up an ad hoc committee with a negotiating mandate based upon the existing consensus. Such an agreement should be negotiated multilaterally and must be verifiable by an international body. It is unfortunate that consensus on a mandate was not reached in the Conference on Disarmament. We hope that, at its present session, the First Committee will generate the required political will in order to encourage the Conference to adopt a negotiating mandate at the commencement of its 1995 session. We would like to thank Ambassador Shannon of Canada who, as Special Coordinator, has carried out intensive consultations on this subject during the current year.

In 1986, Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev jointly declared that a nuclear war cannot be won and, therefore, must never be fought. For many years this remained only a declaration. Today we witness the beginning of a change. Detargeting missiles and lowering the alert status of strategic systems by some countries are positive but essentially limited steps because they are so easily reversible. If the 1986 declaration is to be implemented, then as a first step there must be less reliance on nuclear

weapons and the norm against the use of nuclear weapons must be established. India has therefore called for a convention on the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Such a convention, with universal adherence, would combine both the positive and the negative security assurances which have long been demanded by the non-nuclear-weapon States.

During the cold-war years we witnessed the spiralling costs of the arms race, fuelled by scientific and technological research and development. Science and technology are intended to be the servants of peace, not the masters of war. The military research and development programmes of today will lead to an arms race tomorrow. The only way to tackle this problem is to bring about greater transparency so that scientific and technological developments will be used for peaceful purposes.

Innovations are also required to tackle verification issues, problems of conversion and the elimination of treaty-limited weapons systems. For three years these subjects were under consideration by the Disarmament Commission. Unfortunately, the Commission has been unable to come up with consensus recommendations. Nevertheless, we believe that addressing the qualitative aspects of the arms race is an important issue. We believe that the Secretariat has done useful work in developing criteria for technology assessment. This has been welcomed by the General Assembly and remains valid. We hope that Member States will also provide their views on possible criteria and the steps to be taken for setting up national technology-assessment panels.

The States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be meeting next year to review and take a decision on the extension of the Treaty. India is not a party to the Treaty for reasons that are well known. We have maintained that, in its present form, the NPT is discriminatory. The fact that it has not succeeded fully in its objective of halting the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons is due to its discriminatory character.

The non-aligned countries parties to the NPT have already addressed this issue in a paper presented at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. We hope that the States parties will use the occasion of the 1995 Conference to take the necessary steps to convert the NPT into an instrument for achieving genuine non-proliferation. As was stated by our Prime Minister in January 1992 at the Security Council summit meeting, to be effective, that global non-proliferation meeting must be universal, comprehensive, non-discriminatory and linked to the goal of complete nuclear disarmament.

The expansion of ad hoc export-control regimes, which attempt to deny access to developing countries of high technology because of perceived proliferation concerns, reflects a short-sighted approach. Such regimes are arbitrary, inequitable and discriminatory. Many of these technologies have significant applications in the civilian sector which can help developing countries to overcome the obstacles to achieving their socio-economic development goals. In order to effectively tackle proliferation concerns, these export-control regimes need to be made transparent and able to distinguish between civilian and non-civilian applications. An effective chemical-weapons Convention and a reinvigorated biological-weapons Convention should make the Australia Group redundant. A treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons would make the Nuclear Suppliers' Group redundant. The setting up of an international space agency, along with proposals to tackle ballistic-missile proliferation, would make the Missile Technology Control Regime redundant. Only when non-proliferation objectives are backed by universal and non-discriminatory treaties can export controls serve to strengthen such regimes.

Another welcome trend has been the reduction in global defence expenditures. India's defence expenditure, as a proportion of its gross domestic product, has also declined over the past few years and in 1993 amounted to 2.4 per cent of gross domestic product. In the preceding five years, it registered a negative growth rate of almost 5 per cent. It is relevant to recall that all the developing countries put together account for only 16 per cent of global military expenditures. India has always stood for curbing excess military expenditure and for ensuring that resources freed as a result of disarmament should be diverted to development activities. Unfortunately, we have seen the peace dividend evaporate into greater subsidies for arms suppliers. A related dimension of this is the illicit arms trade which, despite its linkages to terrorism and drug trafficking, has not been reflected in multilateral exercises devoted to increasing arms transparency.

India recognizes that the regional approach can help supplement efforts for global disarmament. However, each region must be defined taking into account the full range of security concerns of the countries involved. Artificial geographical constructs for regions or subregions are unlikely to yield any result. Furthermore, the regional approach is dependent upon consensus-building. The unique characteristics of the East-West divide yielded the experience of the Conference on Security and Cooperation

in Europe, but it is unlikely that this pattern can be replicated in other regions of the world. India's approach in its own region has been to negotiate confidence-building measures with each of its neighbours based upon the dynamics of the bilateral relationship and upon mutuality of interests.

The United Nations framework for pursuing disarmament and security was created during the cold war. This was a period of seeking security through deterrents. Today, we need to seek a system of cooperative security that can address our concerns in a comprehensive manner and that is not based on the militarization of international relations. I am confident that under your chairmanship, Sir, the deliberations of the First Committee will be able to make progress in this direction.

Mr. Al-Faihani (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset, it is gives me great pleasure to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee this year. We are confident that your experience will help us achieve our desired goals. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I reiterate my delegation's eagerness to cooperate with you in the pursuit of our goals at this session. I also wish to thank your predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner, for the efforts he made during his chairmanship at the last session.

Our world is experiencing a succession of rapid changes in international relations as a result of the end of the East-West confrontation. There have also been drastic changes arising from the confidence of States that they have a fresh opportunity to establish a new world order on the basis of United Nations principles regarding the maintenance of international peace and security.

The rapid train of events in international relations over the past few years are of paramount importance in the establishment of that order. Any observer of international relations over these years will have seen that instability has persisted in many parts of the world. Thus, in order to establish peace and security, international relations must be based on the following principles: peaceful coexistence among the peoples of the world; non-interference in the internal affairs of States; respect for the sovereignty and independence of States and for the peaceful resolution of conflicts; prohibition of the use of force; and the mutual interests of all nations.

The great contribution of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security is highly praiseworthy. Since its establishment, the international Organization has sought to ease hotbeds of tension throughout the world. It has had recourse to peace-keeping operations: more than 20 of them, despite the paucity of international resources. As a result of the onerous burden shouldered by the United Nations, we have noticed in the past two years a trend among States to turn to regional organizations in the settlement of regional conflicts. In this respect, my delegation wishes to stress the importance of the relationship between the United Nations and the regional organizations, which is the foundation of world peace and security.

The challenges and threats to international peace and security are many and complex. They are manifested in the stockpiling of weapons — especially weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery — armed conflicts, and such economic and social imbalances as dire poverty, the spread of disease and narcotics, racial and religious discrimination and the deterioration of the environment.

If limits were put on weapons of mass destruction, more funds could be released to deal with such problems. The world needs conventions and agreements limiting these weapons, but we should not confine ourselves merely to that. Rather, we should plan the complete elimination of these weapons since, apart from the exorbitant cost of their production and stockpiling, they pose a threat to the existence of mankind. Their destruction would release additional funds for development.

Any observer can see that the level of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, far exceeds the security and defence requirements of countries. States Members of the United Nations, must therefore support the trend towards limiting and reducing those weapons. Notwithstanding quantitative reductions in weaponry in the context of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces, and the SALT Treaty, there are still colossal numbers of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, which are a source of grave concern. If countries wish to live in peace and security, those possessing huge arsenals must reach agreements on further reductions of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction — especially nuclear weapons, which are the most lethal weapons of all — as a first step towards the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

This year there have been a number of achievements in the field of disarmament. In recent months, the negotiating process has begun in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive test-ban

treaty. Efforts are continuing to prepare for the 1995 review conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the same time, we are pleased to note that many countries are eager to accede to the NPT.

This prompts us to mention the important steps taken to curb the proliferation of lethal weapons. We believe that the international community now has an opportunity to move forward decisively in the field of nuclear disarmament. We also believe that the preparations for the 1995 NPT Review Conference are important for conducting an open and constructive dialogue on the future of the non-proliferation regime. At the same time, any tangible progress on nuclear disarmament measures will have a positive effect on the nuclear non-proliferation regime and on the outcome of the 1995 Review Conference.

We think that the whole question of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is gaining importance in the international community and all the multinational disarmament forums, including the Conference on Disarmament. The international community must therefore focus on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery on an urgent basis because of the threat such weapons pose to mankind. On that basis responsibility for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction lies with all countries that desire to acquire, manufacture or enhance the technology of such weapons.

Regional security is closely linked to international security. In recent years we have noted the increased importance the international community attaches to the maintenance of peace and security in certain regions. In our region, the Middle East, this year has witnessed many developments in the ongoing peace negotiations. We hope that this augurs well for the establishment of lasting peace in the region in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). These developments culminated in the signing on 4 May of a self-rule agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel and the installation of a self-rule authority in Jericho and Gaza. Moreover, Jordan and Israel signed the Washington Declaration on 25 July. We hope that those agreements represent the first steps towards détente in the peace process on both the Syrian and the Lebanese tracks and mark the beginning of a solution to the question of Palestine.

Peace and security in the Middle East require confidence-building, which cannot be achieved unless we can establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and ensure that the region is free of weapons of mass destruction. In that connection his Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Bahrain's Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking in the General Assembly, stated:

> "I should like to reaffirm here our full support for the policy of freeing the Middle East region from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and, accordingly — bearing in mind its capability in this field — we call upon Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 6)*

We are fully confident that the creation of a Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and the accession of the region's countries — particularly those with nuclear capability — to the NPT will contribute to the social and economic progress of the countries of the region. We believe that when the Middle East region is free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction the benefits will not be limited to international peace and security but will include the social and economic development of the entire region, since the funds released will be devoted to the socio-economic sphere, which will enhance the living standards of the population.

In conclusion, I must reiterate the need to implement United Nations resolutions on disarmament, especially all Conventions in that field as well as resolutions dealing with international law. This would help to create a climate conducive to peace and security. We are confident that ongoing efforts in this field will eventually create such a climate and that mankind will overcome all existing impediments to peace and security.

Mr. Shah (Nepal): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the First Committee, on the your well-deserved elections to your important posts. We are confident that your experience and diplomatic skills will guide the deliberations of the Committee to a fruitful conclusion. We assure you of our full cooperation in the Committee's work.

My delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his thought-provoking opening statement to the Committee on 17 October.

The recent changes in East-West relations and the easing of tensions on the international political scene have provided an unprecedented opportunity for arms control and disarmament. We must seize this opportunity to consolidate previous achievements and to chart a constructive course for future action in this field.

My delegation welcomes the recent accession of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Nepal considers the NPT to be an instrument of great significance, and we are eagerly looking forward to participating in the forthcoming NPT review and extension conference in April 1995. We strongly believe that the success of that conference will depend largely on contributions from both the nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States towards achieving consensus on various provisions of the Treaty.

In Nepal's view, a number of critical issues are yet to be addressed in strengthening the NPT regime. The conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty is one critical area. This needs to be accompanied by a ban on the production and export of fissile materials for weapons purposes. We attach equal importance to deeper cuts in the nuclear-weapons stockpile. Until complete nuclear disarmament is achieved, the security of non-nuclear-weapon States must be protected from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Effective and verifiable implementation of these measures will promote complete nuclear disarmament in our generation.

My delegation welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. However, it is our opinion that to enhance transparency in the field of convention weapons there is a need to expand the scope of the Register further. Nepal is against the export and use of antipersonnel land-mines, which must be fully controlled through an effective verification mechanism. Outlawing the use of these inhumane weapons, which have taken the lives of so many innocent civilians and have disabled many more, needs the immediate attention of the international community.

It is encouraging to note that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction has been signed by a large number of countries. The early entry into force of the Convention will expedite the achievement of the goals set in the Convention.

Nepal supports the addition of an effective verification mechanism to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

My delegation considers arms control and disarmament at the regional and the global levels as complementary. We welcome Cuba's recent announcement of its desire to accede to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), which paves the way for early entry into force of the Treaty, making the whole of Latin America a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We are also hopeful that a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the African continent will be adopted soon. Such nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the South Pacific nuclear-free zone and the Antarctic Treaty, cover a large area of the globe. It is in the same spirit that we support the proposal to make South Asia a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We urge the international community to support regional efforts and processes for disarmament.

The United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament are working as important forums for promoting the regional arms-control and disarmament process. These centres should be strengthened, with adequate financial and human resources. We particularly urge the United Nations to support the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, based in Kathmandu. Nepal is fully supportive of the Centre, and urges the international community to extend its support to make the Centre an effective instrument for peace and disarmament in the region. We take this opportunity to state our appreciation for the generous contributions made by Governments, non-governmental organizations and foundations, which have enabled the Centre to undertake the substantive activities that make it an important, active forum to bring together diplomats, academics and specialists in strategic studies on possible approaches to regional disarmament in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Grima (Malta): Mr. Chairman, as this is the first time I am speaking in this Committee, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and to pledge my delegation's support in your efforts towards the successful completion of the tasks before us.

In a world in which States are increasingly being gnawed from within by ethnic strife and tribal conflict, it

was expected that the end of the cold war and the "new world order" would be viewed as two complementary but at the same time very distinct concepts. The end of the cold war has given the United Nations, for the first time in its history, an opportunity to fulfil the vision of its founding fathers. Curiously, the "new world order" has made the fulfilment of that vision seem an almost unrealistically utopian design.

A glance at peace-keeping around the globe, from Somalia to Haiti, from Rwanda to Bosnia, quickly reveals the sometimes bruised, sometimes bloodied, sometimes starved hands outstretched to United Nations peace-keeping. Peace-keeping missions authorized by the Security Council in the last 12 months vividly illustrate the diverse new-world-order expectations of the United Nations. Most therefore agree that whatever the nature of the new world order that is emerging, it brings with it both new opportunities and new challenges, as recent developments in the Middle East have demonstrated.

One such area where very visible and dramatic changes have taken place is that of disarmament. Hence, one essential task of our Committee is, clearly, to identify as precisely as possible where the new opportunities and new challenges lie.

There comes a point where the whole international community needs to be involved in the processes that are unfolding. The effort to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons is such a process, a process which is evolving on a number of fronts that are, to a greater or lesser degree, mutually reinforcing.

My Government welcomes the progress made in the negotiations in Geneva on an effective, multilateral, universally applicable and verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, and is encouraged by the draft text sent to this Committee by the Conference on Disarmament. Also, my delegation applauds the restraint by nuclear-weapon States in testing their nuclear devices. In this context, we, like others, express our concern when, at this critical stage in the Geneva negotiations, the de facto moratorium fails to be observed by all the nuclear-weapon States.

Another important step towards the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime would be a decision by the Conference on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc committee to negotiate a universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Similarly, we would support the strengthening of the Missile Technology Control Regime, which would curb further the expansion of delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the centrepiece of the non-proliferation regime and, hence, the grave responsibility the 1995 review conference places upon the entire international community is self-evident. The Government of Malta believes that for 25 years the Treaty has played a pivotal role in preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons. For this reason, we remain of the firm opinion that the wider interests of the international community lie in the Treaty's indefinite and unconditional extension next year. We welcome the recent accessions to the Non-Proliferation Treaty of Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, bringing the total number of signatories to 165. We urge those States not yet party to the Treaty to join as non-nuclear-weapon States by the time of the review conference.

The ultimate objective of universal adherence could best be secured through the international community adopting an energetic attitude towards countries that seek to obscure their nuclear-weapon-production activities behind the decision not to participate in the NPT. Equally important would be a combination of measures designed to give enhanced credibility to the role of the five nuclear-weapon States. Such measures should at least include strong and legally binding assurances of non-use of nuclear weapons against States not possessing such weapons. In this connection, an interesting proposal has been put forward in this Committee by the representative of Australia for a Security Council resolution that would prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. This proposal deserves further consideration.

Forming part of what the Secretary-General has described as the triad of global treaties concerning weapons of mass destruction, is the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. That Convention has now been signed by 157 States, including my own. My delegation anticipates the early entry into force of the Convention.

The strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on

Their Destruction through the addition of a legally binding and effective verification regime is equally important.

The proliferation and uncontrolled transfer of conventional armaments continue to demand the attention of the international community. Many are in agreement that steps to enhance the transparency of conventional armaments levels constitute a useful confidence- and security-building measure in themselves, while at the same time promoting the process of conventional-arms reduction. At the heart of these efforts lies the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Clearly, the data submitted by some 90 Governments, my own included, is encouraging. However, the scope of the Register can never be fully realized without the widest possible participation. While expressing its continued support for the Register, my delegation regrets that the so-called New York Group was unable to reach consensus on expanding the Register's scope by including data on military holdings and procurement through national production. It is our hope that this can be achieved at the next gathering of governmental experts.

The United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements have a complementary rather than a competing role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was with this in mind that in January 1992, at the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, held in Prague, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta proposed that the CSCE declare itself a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. This proposal was formalized at the Helsinki follow-up meeting and was subsequently endorsed by the CSCE summit of Heads of State or Government in July 1992.

Today, there is a wider and increasing awareness of the importance of consolidating this concept, as reflected by the recent meeting in New York between the Secretary-General and heads of regional organizations. The ultimate objective of such cooperation is that global and regional organizations, equipped with separate but convergent mandates, should become partners in a common purpose: that of contributing towards the development of a fair, equitable and consequently long-lasting process of security. This is increasingly the case in the European experience, as the United Nations has during the past year strengthened its cooperation with regional organizations in our region, in particular with the CSCE.

My Government shares the view of the European Union, as expressed by the representative of Germany, that the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation plays a crucial role in regional security. The security Forum negotiates on matters ranging from conventional-arms control to non-proliferation and has broken new ground by agreeing to principles on the transfer of conventional arms, stability measures for regional crises, the exchange of information on defence planning, and a programme for military cooperation and contacts. Similarly, my delegation considers the Open Skies Treaty to be a unique confidence- and security-building measure and looks forward to its early entry into force.

Malta's commitment to the CSCE process is a demonstration of its full engagement in European security and cooperation.

Among the most significant developments that have undoubtedly contributed to enhanced security and cooperation in Europe is the 1986 Single European Act. The Union has now moved beyond the process of political cooperation initiated then towards the objective of a common foreign and security policy. Malta's application for full membership of the European Union, in itself, testifies to the support of my Government for this important political evolution in Europe.

More than 200 years ago, the great English writer Samuel Johnson wrote that the grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. Two hundred years later, that remains true. There is now, however, also a painful awareness that multiple sources of instability plague the Mediterranean region. Dangerous levels of armaments and severe economic imbalances exist. Both in terms of quantity and in terms of destructive potential, the flow of armaments into the region is indeed daunting. Addressing a symposium held in Tunis in November 1992, my Foreign Minister, Mr. Guido de Marco, said:

> "An analysis of the situation portrays dangers, divisions and disparities. Some have described the situation in our region as a time bomb with an ever-shortening fuse. Ours, I believe, is the responsibility to defuse this time bomb."

Two separate perspectives influence the manner in which Malta today looks at questions of Mediterranean security and cooperation.

One of these is defined by geographical location. Situated at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, Malta has

historically had a very close involvement in the vicissitudes of the region. For Malta, the Mediterranean Sea is not simply its only frontier with neighbouring States; it is a shared area of common interest and activity with these States. All major, and most minor, events in the area have a direct and intimate bearing on Malta's own national life, in terms both of security and of economic well-being. As a consequence, the quest for regional stability and cooperation has a much deeper and more pervasive significance for Malta than it normally has for many other countries.

The other perspective is defined by Malta's overriding political objective of becoming a member of the European Union. What is generally described as Malta's European vocation may, in comparison with the realities of geography, be considered as a deliberate choice from a set of equally available options. We in Malta see things differently, taking it for granted that history is as much an imperative as geography in determining geopolitical options.

As a result, it is today a fact that Malta's attitudes towards developments in the Mediterranean are, as a consistent act of policy, increasingly being moulded within the frame of thinking of European, and more specifically, southern European countries. One of Malta's strongest arguments for membership of the European Union is precisely the enrichment that, through its Mediterranean location and perspective, it brings to the European security equation.

As my Prime Minister, Mr. Edward Fenech Adami, recently emphasized,

> "it is worth remarking that the duality in Malta's inspiration on Mediterranean issues is not unique".

It is a duality shared, to different degrees, by coastal States to the North, South, East and West, and which today altogether coincides with the perspective outlined by the French Foreign Minister, Alain Juppé. In his statement to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Juppé stated that France would like to see Europe organize a forum for cooperation involving all Mediterranean States and would be making this one of the main goals of its forthcoming presidency of the European Union. Malta welcomes this approach.

Efforts have not been lacking to generate some form of extended dialogue that would deal with issues focused on wide-ranging Mediterranean concerns. Malta has traditionally sought to encourage such efforts in the conviction that the security and stability that would result from a process of consultation and cooperation in the Mediterranean are not simply desirable objectives at the regional level but also constitute an essential dimension of European security.

The CSCE continues to gradually seek new opportunities for the involvement of non-participating Mediterranean States in its activities. We have also proposed the concept of the Council of the Mediterranean, based upon the methods and approaches of the Council of Europe. Malta, together with 10 other Mediterranean States, is currently involved in a project for the launching of a Mediterranean forum. Similarly, the proposal for a Council of the Mediterranean has a special attraction because it promises to support a sufficiently broad and flexible agenda and to permit from the outset a properly structured participation by both Mediterranean and interested extra-regional States in the process of building up a Mediterranean dialogue. At the same time, we also recognize that this, and related initiatives, do not constitute ends in themselves, but only means towards achieving a common objective: the promotion of peace and stability in our region. For this to be realized, we must be able to adopt pragmatic approaches, especially in our search for and utilization of initiatives for functional cooperation, without, however, relinquishing our overriding political objectives and ideals.

The search for security, be it at the regional or the global level, ultimately transcends institutional issues and touches upon the political will of the parties involved. It is in the engendering of this political will where it is still lacking that we must all exercise our deepest commitment. My delegation is confident that, with the right political will, this Committee can make a significant contribution in this direction.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the observer of the Holy See, His Excellency Archbishop Renato Martino.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): Mr. Chairman, I wish to extend congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important committee. I also extend best wishes to the other officers of the Committee.

On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, at this time of review, renewal and reform, all States are challenged to concentrate on one of the central purposes of the Organization: to save succeeding

generations from the scourge of war. This is very much in the mind of the Holy See, recalling the memorable words of Pope Paul VI, addressed to the General Assembly in October 1965:

> "Never again one against another, never, never again! ... Never again war, war never again! Peace, it is peace, which must guide the destiny of the peoples and of all mankind!" (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 1347th meeting, para. 33*)

Despite this appeal and despite the efforts made by this Committee through the years, wars, internal conflicts, guerrilla warfare and terrorist attacks persist. The continuing discord in the world prevents us from celebrating peace. Yet we may take some satisfaction from the higher level of understanding of what is required today to achieve true peace. In the post-cold-war era, security requires disarmament, yes. But more than disarmament is needed. A new understanding of security was underlined at the historic Security Council summit in 1992:

> "The absence of war and military conflicts amongst States does not in itself ensure international peace and security. The non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to peace and security." (*S/PV.3046, p. 143*)

To its credit, this Committee, which has expanded its horizons to deal with security in its broader dimensions, is now advancing the recognition that peace and security are dependent on socio-economic factors as well as on political and military elements. Although there is not yet agreement in the Committee on an integrated agenda for security, there is a growing understanding that the non-use of force in international relations, economic and social development, respect for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the need to preserve the environment are all closely related and provide the basis for enduring and stable universal peace and security.

The search for a security system that can be supported by all States characterizes the coming anniversary. What frequently appears to be a slow pace forward, with the inevitable backward steps, need not be a reason for discouragement. The fact remains that the world is undergoing a transformation of massive proportions, with peace, development and democracy more closely interlinked than ever before. Humanity is poised to move forward. The vastness of this agenda taxes the international community's ability to deal with it. This ought not to overwhelm us, but should rather inspire us to work more determinedly together for the good of all.

Disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, is an inescapable dimension of this new security agenda. The Holy See has consistently insisted on the need to take concrete steps towards complete and general disarmament, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. My delegation has stated before the Committee that the world requires a post-nuclear form of security. The aim is to achieve a non-nuclear regime. Significant measures have already been taken towards the total elimination of chemical and biological (bacteriological) weapons. Similar agreements must progressively be reached in the nuclear field.

All nuclear-weapon States must reconsider the place of nuclear weapons in their national security policies. The efforts of all nuclear-weapon States are needed if nuclear disarmament is to become a reality and the non-proliferation regime effectively strengthened.

The conference of States parties to the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in 1995, will allow the international community to test its political will concerning the implementation of the stringent conditions of Article VI of the Treaty. Each of the parties, non-nuclear as well as nuclear, has pledged:

> "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating ... to nuclear disarmament, and ... on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

The nuclear-weapon States bear a particular responsibility in this regard. Their agreement to cease nuclear-weapons testing and to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty as rapidly as possible will give proof of the seriousness of their intent.

While a comprehensive test-ban treaty would reduce what could be considered the discriminatory nature of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, there are other parallel steps to be undertaken. These include the complete cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes; steady reduction on the part of all nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and assurance of the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States. This programme of action would be of inestimable value in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons to other States. In

this respect, we welcome the efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on a regional level.

In our times, humanity suffers from many armed conflicts, fought almost exclusively with conventional weapons and fed by a proliferation of arms which is often simply taken for granted. Sowing arms to the four winds could well result in reaping the whirlwind of war on one's own soil. Arms transfers raise serious moral problems that must be addressed. The Holy See, through the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, recently published an ethical reflection on these problems, entitled *The International Arms Trade*. This publication is intended to mobilize new forces for the control and radical reduction of these transfers.

Fortunately, interest in the international control of arms transfers has increased, as evidenced in the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. This favourable moment must be seized and arms transfers effectively controlled and radically reduced. The Holy See therefore supports expanding the Arms Register, which in its first two years has established its usefulness, to include wider definitions of weapons systems beyond the present seven categories. Transparency is fundamental to the strengthening of measures regulating the transfer of conventional arms. It is an indispensable confidence- and security-building measure.

Further, dealing effectively with illicit transfers of arms, many of which are small arms, must be given higher priority on the international agenda. This trade is closely linked to conflicts, mercenary operations, terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and other destabilizing activities. Strict measures on the national level concerning the sale or transfer of light arms and hand weapons are a necessary, if preliminary, step towards international control.

In this time of armed conflict, land-mines cause unacceptable damage to civilian populations. Even after the cessation of hostilities, they continue to maim and kill. The victims are very often innocent children. As the Secretary-General has noted:

> "It is clear that if future generations are to have any relief from this egregious humanitarian burden, the international community must take measures to limit the production, use and sale of anti-personnel land-mines, with a view to achieving a complete ban." *(A/49/1, para. 771)*.

The Holy See requests the international community to address this question with the greatest urgency.

Moreover, the clearance of mined terrain is a massive problem. Some 110 million mines remain buried and an estimated 2 to 5 million more were laid last year alone, while only about 100,000 were removed during the same period. To signify its support of the humanitarian operations of the United Nations in mine clearance, the Holy See has made a symbolic financial contribution towards the work of the Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

The coming review conference of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects should allow States to strengthen their resolve to ban the production and transfer of other types of inhumane weapons including, for example, new types of laser weapons that would permanently blind an adversary. The Holy See strongly supports efforts in this regard.

It must not be forgotten, however, that efforts to limit the disastrous effects of war and armed conflict do not replace the indispensable measures required to prevent them. On the eve of the second half-century of the United Nations, every State and all States together are called upon to renew the determination expressed at the time of its founding. States then committed themselves not only to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, but also to reaffirm their faith in the dignity of the human person and to promote, in freedom, social progress and better standards of life for all. The realization of all these commitments would contribute not just to the survival of all people, but to the enduring peace for which they long.

Mr. Sukayri (Jordan): At the outset, Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election, and to pledge to you all my delegation's fullest cooperation and support.

Your predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, and his colleagues deserve our gratitude for their achievements and dedication last session.

Before I tackle the issues of international security and disarmament on our agenda this session, I should like to refer to the positive developments which have taken place this year in the region of the Middle East. There is no doubt that such developments as the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty, which was initialled last week and which will be

signed the day after tomorrow, will have a great impact on regional security and will help build confidence in the region, thus constituting an important step on the road towards a just, comprehensive, and durable peace in the Middle East.

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has become a top priority on the international agenda, simply because the proliferation of such weapons poses a grave threat to international peace and security and thus constitutes a major concern for the international community.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), of which the review and extension conference will be held next April, is the backbone of the international non-proliferation regime. My country, Jordan, has been a strong supporter of the Treaty since its accession to the NPT. However, we believe that the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, along with security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and the universality of the Treaty, are essential before an indefinite extension of the Treaty can take place. The meagre progress which the Conference on Disarmament has achieved so far towards the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty does not encourage us to believe that such a treaty will be concluded very soon. The controversy over security assurances, as well as the reluctance of some States to accede to the Treaty, makes the prospect for an indefinite extension of the NPT look very gloomy.

We share the appeal made in this Committee, on behalf of the European Union and by some other delegations, to all countries which have not yet acceded to the NPT to do so as soon as possible, and we commend steps taken recently by Algeria and a number of other countries in this regard. We also reiterate our call for the placement of all nuclear facilities, especially in the region of the Middle East, under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Besides security concerns relating to the threat of nuclear proliferation, uninspected nuclear facilities raise the question of human and environmental safety, which is of the utmost importance to my country.

As part of its active participation in the peace process, my country is participating in good faith in multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament. We are hopeful that these negotiations will soon lead to effective and verifiable arms-control agreements between the States of the region. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be a major achievement. We fully support this goal, and believe that such a step would enhance confidence and eliminate a major threat to regional security, in addition to its contribution to worldwide general and complete nuclear disarmament.

For the second consecutive year, we would like to quote from the "Study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East", contained in document A/45/435 of 10 October 1990, which stated that:

> "Adherence to the NPT by all States of the region — and notably by Israel — would be a most significant milestone. Pending such a measure, the acceptance by Israel of safeguards on the Dimona facilities would be an important move towards the establishment of a zone and could be realized well in advance of its adherence to the NPT." *(A/45/435, para. 181).*

The momentum that the conclusion of the Jordanian-Israeli Treaty has created in the Middle East should be maintained. My delegation believes that a positive step such as accession by Israel to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the placement of all Israeli nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards would definitely lead to the maintenance and further enhancement of this momentum. The elimination of a major threat to regional security would also contribute to confidence-building, which is essential to pave the way towards more progress on the other tracks of the peace process. A Middle East free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction would undoubtedly be different from the Middle East of today: the most volatile region ever known.

Transparency in armaments is undoubtedly of the utmost importance to confidence-building, and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is the main instrument by which such transparency can be achieved. My country has been a staunch supporter of the Register and has provided the Secretary-General with the required data on Jordan's arms transfers. We have also participated actively in the negotiations conducted by the group of governmental experts on the expansion and development of the Register. We regret, however, that no progress has been achieved in this regard, but are hopeful that another attempt, accompanied by the political will to develop the Register, will come about before too long.

My delegation would like to stress the need for a mechanism at the international level to stop the illicit transfer of arms — both conventional and non-conventional. We also support all efforts leading to the elimination of the

threat of anti-personnel mines. In this regard, my country has provided the Secretary-General with a comprehensive technical report on the status of anti-personnel mines in Jordan. As a non-mine-producing country, Jordan commends the voluntary export moratoriums now imposed by some States, and is focusing its attention on the question of demining.

My delegation reiterates its call for the initiation by the Conference on Disarmament of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material that can be used for the manufacture of nuclear explosive devices. Last session we supported General Assembly resolution 48/75 L in this regard and will support any text on this subject this year.

Continued efforts to convert weapons industries in the former Eastern bloc to peaceful uses, and efforts in other parts of the world to redirect resources from military to peaceful civilian purposes are highly commendable. We are hopeful that such measures may become possible in the Middle East very soon. One of the positive results of the peace process in that region should be a major shift from the arms race to cooperation in security and socio-economic development. Such a shift would certainly eliminate a major source of insecurity in its broader sense. Threats to security do not emanate exclusively from the accumulation of weapons, but also from poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation. Hence the need for economic and social development.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your well-deserved election as Chairman of the First Committee at the present session of the General Assembly. The Committee will have to deal with some very serious and sometimes contentious issues of fundamental concern to the international community. I have no doubt that under your chairmanship the Committee will succeed in making an effective contribution to the ongoing debate on the various issues. I should like also to thank Ambassador von Wagner of Germany for his tireless efforts during his chairmanship at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

My country has a deep interest in disarmament issues, and follows the debate very seriously, since these issues are of great significance to us. The outcome of debates and negotiations on disarmament issues, in addition to having major implications at the global level, affects us at a regional level as well. Since our positions on various disarmament issues have been elaborated in detail on previous occasions, I shall be brief here in outlining the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran on several important issues.

I turn first to nuclear disarmament and the 1995 conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The end of the cold war and confrontation between the two major blocs provided the hope that the international community would seize the opportunity to make progress on various aspects of disarmament. The aim of such efforts is centred on the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and on reductions of conventional weapons. Unfortunately, however, the action taken so far on the most important issue of disarmament, namely nuclear disarmament, have not been promising. We have not yet seen any move, or heard of any intention, by nuclear-weapon States towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. The continued existence of vast stocks of nuclear weapons with enormous destructive capacity still poses a significant threat to humanity. We believe that non-proliferation in itself will not succeed in achieving nuclear disarmament if it is not coupled with the elimination of nuclear weapons. Now the time is ripe for the Conference on Disarmament to start negotiations on the destruction of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework with a target date.

In order to ensure a successful review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its possible extension for a fixed period or periods, it is imperative that nuclear-weapon States ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it is imperative that the right of all States parties to the Treaty to develop the peaceful use of nuclear energy for economic and social development be guaranteed and that existing restrictions in this regard be eliminated. At the review conference, we will also have the opportunity to examine the prospects for a comprehensive test-ban treaty and a comprehensive, verifiable treaty on the prohibition of fissile material. In this respect, we greatly welcome the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The members of the Conference on Disarmament should seize the opportunity now to redouble their efforts towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive and verifiable treaty banning all tests in all environments, including non-explosive detonating or laboratory tests, binding on all States without exception. The treaty should also commit all States parties to closing their nuclear test sites and to destroying any equipment specifically designed for testing.

Furthermore, as we strive to attain the goal of prohibiting all testing before the 1995 NPT conference, the option of amending the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty should be openly discussed in the First Committee at this session. This option could provide us with the best avenue, should it prove impossible, because of the technicalities involved in the verification system, to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty by early 1995.

We are concerned, however, that the Conference on Disarmament negotiations on a cut-off treaty have not been started because of the lack of consensus on the scope of such a treaty. The conclusion of a treaty banning the production and stockpiling of fissile materials would be a significant contribution to our collective efforts towards nuclear disarmament and should therefore be pursued enthusiastically.

We also need to examine the possibility of States not parties to the NPT acceding to the Treaty, with particular attention to the situation in the Middle East and to the refusal of Israel, with its unyielding nuclear programme, to open its nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It should be realized that the continuation of discriminatory policies by nuclear-weapon States that practise selective proliferation rather than non-proliferation would pose a major threat to peace and security in the Middle East and would hamper the success of any disarmament initiative in that region.

The chemical weapons Convention is the first successful global attempt to control and eventually eliminate a class of weaponry that threatens humanity, while simultaneously providing for harnessing the knowledge and technology that created these evil instruments for the greater development and well-being of the peoples of the world. The chemical weapons Convention is therefore more than just a security treaty. For the majority of its members it also represents an instrument which should ensure the development of an important industry.

Since the chemical weapons Convention employs the most extensive and comprehensive inspection mechanisms to verify the non-proliferation of chemical weapons in a non-discriminatory manner, any other unilateral restrictions against the States parties would be contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Convention. Restrictions by the Australian Group on the pretext of export control and monitoring must be removed for all States parties to the chemical weapons Convention without exception. Such controls in the chemical field may apply only to countries which are not parties to the Treaty. For the States parties to the Treaty, only the provisions of the Conventions would apply.

The preparatory work at The Hague, which has otherwise moved forward smoothly, has been marred by difficulties in arriving at solutions on some significant and contentious issues. In fact, most of the questions that had been resolved politically during the negotiations have met with contradictory interpretations and positions. As anticipation mounts for the Convention's entry into force, efforts need to be intensified to resolve pending issues, including particularly those relating to the definition of chemical weapons, inspection procedures, challenge inspections and old, abandoned, dumped and buried chemical weapons, as well as fundamental issues of peaceful use, in order to ensure finalization of the preparatory work in 1995.

The same is true for the biological weapons Convention. The current discussions on the establishment of a verification system will surely succeed if they are coupled with a firm commitment to the free flow of material and technology for peaceful use — an undertaking with a direct impact on the development of the developing countries in the field of health. The arbitrary limitation of transfers of material and technology for peaceful purposes has also had an adverse impact on the formulation of verification machinery related to the biological weapons Convention. We welcome the decision of the Special Conference of States Parties to the biological weapons Convention, held recently in Geneva, to mandate a working group to formulate specific measures to ensure the full and effective implementation of article X, on peaceful use, avoiding any restrictions against States parties.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to transparency in armaments as a confidence-building measure that would facilitate the negotiations of disarmament and arms-control treaties. In this context, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms can serve as a real confidence-builder only if it is expanded to include data and information on all types of conventional weapons, including holdings in other territories, military support commitments by other States through bilateral or multilateral agreements, and weapons of mass destruction in all their aspects. This was the basic thrust of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L of 1991.

At the same time, we must also be able to deal with massive military production, particularly by major producers. Unfortunately, since the end of the cold war we have seen new trends in the conventional-arms marketplace,

and the initial euphoria of peace has been replaced by the expectation that large-scale violence will be part of the international scene.

In the post-cold-war era, reductions in national defence spending by most major arms-exporting nations have forced the arms industries to seek foreign weapons contracts to replace declining domestic orders. For such sales to materialize, tension and confrontation must be developed and must persist. If the international community does not take proper action to benefit from the positive post-cold-war environment, we will be faced very soon with new areas of contention. Only by moving towards lower levels of production can we hope that transparency in armaments will continue to serve the intended objective.

Mr. Pibulsonggram (Thailand): On behalf of the Thai delegation, I extend warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. I believe that, with your able guidance, the First Committee will complete its work in a successful and constructive manner. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, of the Thai delegation's full support and cooperation in the work of the Committee. Allow me, too, to pay tribute to your predecessor as Chairman, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, for his excellent work in guiding the Committee last year.

The diminishing probability of super-Power military confrontation has presented the world community with an unprecedented opportunity to make real progress in the field of disarmament, particularly in the sphere of nuclear weapons. Indeed, several positive breakthroughs towards reducing levels of weapons of mass destruction have been made in the past several years. The conclusion of a chemical-weapons Convention and the establishment of a United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in 1993, along with the historic tripartite Agreement between the United States, Russia and Ukraine, which made possible the full implementation of the START I and START II Treaties, are among the notable steps towards arms control, as well as general and complete disarmament.

However, reductions in arms do not necessarily bring about a reduction in tensions and crises. Arms are still there, for offence or for defence, and the world community has lately been confronting a new surge of political and economic conflicts in various shapes and forms. These are the result of ethnic and religious tensions, militant nationalism and illicit arms transfers, as well as of poverty and underdevelopment. In short, the risks to international peace and security remain as high and complex as ever.

It is no surprise therefore that, despite years of discussion, arms control continues to be one of the most important agenda items in the effort to promote international security. And, despite increased cooperation in the field of arms control and disarmament, the threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction still exists as a challenge to the international community.

In this regard, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be an important legal instrument of the disarmament process. My delegation wishes to see universal participation in and, more important, full adherence to the NPT. Thailand believes that the NPT is of vital importance and should be extended when States parties deliberate this matter in April 1995. The 1995 NPT extension Conference should be viewed also as an opportunity to consider constructive proposals to strengthen the Treaty. The security interests of all countries, and particularly the non-nuclear States, should be enhanced and protected. My delegation is of the view that the question of the indefinite extension of the NPT will be determined by whether or not the Treaty can gain the confidence of all States. At this juncture, without a convergence of views, my delegation feels that a definite time-frame would be more acceptable.

Thailand also takes this opportunity to welcome the new States parties to the NPT — Belarus and Kazakhstan — and hopes that Ukraine will accede as a non-nuclear State in the near future.

In the area of a nuclear-test ban, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the voluntary moratorium declared on nuclear tests has continued to be observed by most of the nuclear-Powers. However, a multilateral legal instrument to prohibit nuclear testing is needed. My delegation notes that the Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear test ban has made significant progress in its efforts to draft a treaty. A comprehensive test-ban treaty would play an important part in global nuclear non-proliferation efforts. We sincerely hope that the negotiations will be brought expeditiously to the successful conclusion of a universal and multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban Treaty. Timely conclusion would also contribute to a satisfactory outcome of the 1995 NPT review conference.

As a supplementary measure to strengthen the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the prohibition of the production of fissionable material would be most welcome.

With that objective in view, the Special Coordinator — a post set up by the Conference on Disarmament — should be widely supported so that it will be possible to obtain consensus on appropriate arrangements for negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

There has been a tragic surge in armed conflicts at the local and regional levels, and we continue to see that conventional arms are still the main cause of human suffering. Illicit transfers of conventional arms pose no less a threat to international peace and security than does the proliferation of nuclear weapons. My delegation therefore supports the restrictions on conventional-arms transfers in so far as such restrictions do not infringe upon the right to self-defence accorded to States under the United Nations Charter.

With regard to anti-personnel land-mines, contingents of the Royal Thai Army have assisted in the demining operations in Cambodia, both directly and under United Nations auspices. Having helped many victims, including our own civilians who live on the border with Cambodia, we are fully aware of the barbaric effects of these devices. Thailand fully supports the moratoriums on the import and export of anti-personnel land-mines and strongly urges all States to do likewise.

My delegation welcomes the progress made at The Hague towards implementing the chemical-weapons Convention. The Thai Government continues to work on the process required for ratification of this Convention and is in the process of establishing a national authority to oversee the implementation of the Convention. We believe that international training programmes to provide competent inspectors and local officials will facilitate the establishment of a national authority and of effective national verification procedures. In preparation for effective implementation of the chemical-weapons Convention by regional countries, the Governments of Australia and Thailand jointly organized a regional seminar in Bangkok on 9 and 10 May 1994.

Significant progress has been made in the field of transparency in conventional-arms transfers. My delegation supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which was established last year, as a means of promoting preventive diplomacy. My delegation agrees that transparency in conventional-arms imports and exports could result in better understanding and could build confidence among nations. This might, in turn, prevent prevailing uncertainties from escalating into actual conflicts.

In this regard, the Thai agencies concerned are considering participating in the arms Register. However, we believe that this is only a beginning. We should not rest until the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is developed into a universal and comprehensive mechanism covering all types and categories of arms — stockpiles, indigenous production, and weapons undergoing research, development, testing and evaluation — as well as industries with the potential to be turned at short notice to the production of arms.

Thailand believes that, with or without weapons, peoples and countries are prone to conflict if they do not trust each other. Therefore, we firmly believe in reducing the risk of conflict; one way of doing so is through confidence-building.

My delegation is gratified to note that regional institutions continue to contribute to this confidence-building. In Europe, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is a mechanism for cooperative security in the region. In Asia and the Pacific, security cooperation among members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other countries in the region, through the ASEAN Regional Forum, has taken off. We are proud that the first Forum session was held in Bangkok on 25 July 1994 with the aim of stimulating the confidence-building process and developing a sense of security as well as transparency measures through the effective consultative Asia-Pacific Forum. Thailand believes that the Forum will serve as a very useful vehicle for confidence-building, as openness and dialogue are fundamental if we are to create trust and good relations. Such confidence-building, in turn, could lead to the process of arms reduction in the region.

Thailand appreciates the implementation of measures and the substantive support for the initiative for peace and disarmament provided by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. Through its various meetings, the Centre has encouraged fruitful regional and subregional consultations for the promotion of confidence-building measures and the enhancement of disarmament and international security. Thailand will continue to support and participate in the activities and initiatives of the Centre.

While there have been tangible achievements in arms control, much on the agenda remains to be accomplished. Besides the various agenda items at this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, we will be participating in January in the fourth meeting of the Preparatory Committee

for the review and extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In April, a decision has to be made on an extension of the NPT. Also next year, the chemical weapons Convention is expected to enter into force, and vigorous negotiations on the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty will continue. Working against the backdrop of the present international environment, as the most suitable multinational forum for fostering global consensus on the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the First Committee today finds itself at a very opportune time. Gone should be the day when items before the Committee are used as tools to reaffirm or challenge the superiority of one or another major Power. Gone also should be the day when, for the majority of States, NPT, CTBT, CWC and many others are mere acronyms. These items before us are more significant to world peace than ever before. Let us try to reach out with unity of purpose and seize this unique opportunity to present the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations with really a credible outcome of the First Committee's work this year.

Mr. Shambos (Cyprus): May I first congratulate you, Sir, and the other officers of the Committee on your election. I am confident that under your wise guidance the goals of the Committee will be fully achieved.

It is a fact that for decades following the establishment of the United Nations, almost every effort to make progress towards disarmament and arms control was aborted by the rigidities of the cold war. The latter's demise has certainly opened up exciting new possibilities for the international community to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the concomitant arms race.

In the context of newly evolved, wider international developments, the arms control agenda is now being effectively addressed. In the last two years we have seen major achievements, the most important of which was the signing of the chemical-weapons Convention in early 1993.

Furthermore, the potential commitments we hope will be entered into in the near future — the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, the strengthening of the biological-weapons Convention with the development of an effective verification regime, and efforts to arrive at a mandate for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive devices — will certainly keep up the momentum that has been created in the disarmament field. Much still needs to be done, however. The smuggling of nuclear material and the continuing operation of unsafe nuclear plants pose a great threat to humanity. The dangers affect us all because of their global dimension.

At its 1992 summit meeting, the Security Council rightly stated that the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security. The United Nations and each Member State must shoulder the responsibility for overcoming both old and new threats. We must therefore continue our efforts to erect barriers against the proliferation of both non-conventional and conventional weapons.

It is true that, unlike nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction and the technology needed for their use, conventional weapons are not a question that lends itself easily to the global disarmament agenda. International activities in this area have been directed mainly against the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons and towards the need for transparency. A significant achievement to this end was the creation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which we believe could be further developed and upgraded in such a way that it would encourage universal participation. We look forward to its extension beyond transfers to cover production and holdings so that it may become a real international exercise in transparency in conventional weaponry.

Equally important are efforts to halt illicit and covert arms trafficking through tighter controls and closer cooperation and coordination.

There is also a compelling need to strengthen the inhumane-weapons Convention — in particular to extend control over the use of and trade in land-mines, given the indiscriminate injuries and death they cause to civilian populations long after conflicts have ceased. My delegation has sponsored the relevant draft resolution calling for a moratorium on the export of land-mines. We also support in this regard the creation of a United Nations mine-clearance fund to protect civilian populations.

Next year, an objective of particular significance will be the conference to renew and extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains a remarkable accomplishment and the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation. The NPT remains a meaningful instrument in progress towards complete nuclear disarmament. A decision next year to extend the Treaty will allow us to secure its benefits in perpetuity. Indefinite extension would create a most favourable environment where psychological pressures for

continued nuclear disarmament will be maximized. We therefore support the Secretary-General's proposal that the Treaty be extended indefinitely and unconditionally when its term expires in 1995. The extension arrangements should be equitable and verifiable and must be based on collective commitments by all States for a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard we share the view that security assurances should be granted to all States signatories to the NPT.

At the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that, under the United Nations Charter, disarmament and arms control are an integral part of international peace and security. We fully support the ideas of the Secretary-General on disarmament as outlined in his report, "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

So long as military threats to security exist, the disarmament and arms control process will continue to be an essential element of international security. We therefore subscribe to the view that, although a global military conflict is now far less probable, military conflicts limited in scope pose a new and difficult challenge. The ratio of the number of new or continuing conflicts to that of conflicts that have been successfully prevented or resolved is of concern. It indicates that the current international security environment is far from satisfactory and that further efforts must be made to find new and improved ways of preventing and resolving conflicts. In this respect, the close correlation between arms control and the prohibition of force deserves our most urgent attention as the temptation to apply military force and exhibit military might in regional and local conflicts grows stronger and more menacing.

Since our admission to the United Nations in 1960, my delegation has been committed to the quest for general and complete disarmament in the context of the efforts of the Organization to establish international peace and security. We have consistently supported the view that genuine and lasting peace can be created only through the implementation of an effective international security system, as provided for in the United Nations Charter, since disarmament is part and parcel of the United Nations system of collective international security. Naturally, United Nations efforts are aimed also at liberating arms-directed resources and funds for use in social and economic development, which in turn contribute to economic stability. For, as the Secretary-General has stated, there can be no sustainable peace without development and no development without peace.

It is in this context that I refer now to the proposal of President Clerides, presented before the General Assembly at its current session, for demilitarization and disarmament in Cyprus. We firmly believe that this proposal, if seen by all those concerned in its proper perspectives and dimensions, could serve as the proper instrument to address effectively the grave security and other concerns of the people of my country, including the termination of the continuing Turkish military occupation of almost 40 per cent of the territory of Cyprus, thus paving the way for an overall solution of the Cyprus problem in conformity with the Charter and with United Nations resolutions. Moreover, we believe that it could also serve as a significant contribution in its own right to the cause of security and peace in the volatile eastern Mediterranean region and beyond.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the paramount responsibility and great expectations that emerge for our generation in the face of existing challenges, shaping trends, fluid developments and promising potentials. While pondering the vast spectrum of issues, choices and approaches, let us not fail to be guided by reason and justice as the ultimate forces for galvanizing our determination to produce proper decisions and rightful actions, lest we, in the words of the philosopher of old, Heraclitus of Ephesus,

> "exceeding the limits and measures of reason, which permeates the universe, be caught by the Furies, and fatal judgement be passed upon us all".

Such a judgement would be passed upon us not least, I might say, by succeeding generations, for mankind can afford to pay no more in human blood and misery for our own repeated but avoidable follies.

Mr. Ghafoorzai (Afghanistan): Mr. Chairman, I begin by joining previous speakers congratulating you and other the officers of the Committee on your unanimous elections. Your long years of experience and association with the United Nations and international affairs, Sir, provide us with every assurance that the First Committee will conduct its proceedings in a successful manner. I also extend a word of appreciation for the excellent manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, accomplished his duties as Chairman of the First Committee during the past session of the General Assembly.

The delegation of Afghanistan takes part in the general debate on disarmament and international security with

particular interest. As history attests, Afghanistan's tranquillity has always been a source of peace for Asia, just as its turbulence has always been a major contributing factor to the region's instability. With a somewhat turbulent situation in the country as a legacy of 14 long years of foreign aggression, we have turned to the United Nations, as a neutral party which cannot have a direct interest, to play a role in complementing our national efforts towards the consolidation of peace, security and stability in our country, thus enabling us to contribute effectively to the maintenance and further consolidation of regional and international peace and security.

There have always been two main sources of threats against regional and international security: political rivalries between sovereign nation-States and constant advances in military technology. These two causes sometimes interact. The political objectives of sovereign nation States, and in particular major Powers remain incompatible, while advances in military technology and the arms race seem to have been dramatically reduced as a result of the end of the cold war and of world polarization. It is as a result of this incompatibility that new situations threatening regional and international peace and security are emerging in the form of increased regional confrontations and violations of human rights and of the principle of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Our world is today no longer one of bloc confrontation. The lack of coordination between the interests of blocs no longer interferes in or aggravates every international conflict. In this atmosphere, there are more opportunities for collective international efforts under the United Nations umbrella to change the totality of international relations and to improve the quality of the international environment in such a way that conditions can be created for lasting solutions to key problems. It is therefore essential to strengthen all instruments available for the maintenance of balance, the peaceful settlement of disputes and strict adherence to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. We see a particular need for confidence-building measures — of which transparency is an important component — to create assurances for States that the political objectives and legitimate interests of one sovereign State do not go beyond its boundaries. Regional organizations can play an important role in the creation of such trust and confidence.

Today the threat of a nuclear confrontation has been drastically diminished. However, the existence of nuclear armaments continues to jeopardize the objective of a safe world free from the threat of nuclear conflict, of which there can be no victors. That is why Afghanistan has always advocated general and complete disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament under effective international control. In negotiations on the reduction of armaments, the great Powers should take into account the principle of equal security for all, irrespective of size, military strength, socio-political systems or political and economic importance.

Disarmament should go hand in hand with the prevention of the use of force because, even if total disarmament were achieved, asymmetry in military and economic power would continue to be a problem for the security of small and medium-sized countries. It is equally important that effective steps be taken towards a reduction of conventional armaments. This is particularly important because the destructive power of conventional weapons is increasing and because such weapons have been and continue to be used in all conflicts in the post-War period — in which, according to the available statistics, there have been more casualties than in the two World Wars.

On the issue of the security of States, in spite of the United Nations Charter, numerous resolutions, covenants and bilateral and multilateral treaties, neither peace nor the security of all nations has been achieved or institutionalized. Armed conflicts, local wars, aggression and intervention continue to take place. Gross interference in the internal affairs of States by open or covert measures, the exploitation of internal difficulties and disputes, and the intrusion of individual interests still exist. This is particularly so in the case of countries that have yet to overcome the effects of major crises, such as my own, Afghanistan. The illegal export and sending of arms to zones of conflict seem to have been a contributing factor to such gross interference and to violations of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

In appreciation of the need to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms, the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session adopted resolution 48/75 H, in which it invited Member States to take appropriate enforcement measures directed at ending the illegal export of conventional weapons from their territories. It also requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Governments on effective ways and means of collecting weapons illegally distributed in countries, and to submit a report at its forty-ninth session.

In response to this request, the Secretary-General has submitted his report, contained in document A/49/343 of 29 August 1994. Based upon the reaction of States, it is a matter of regret to us to see that Member States have yet fully to recognize the negative and destructive role which the availability of illegal arms and their transfer to conflicting groups in troubled zones can play. This problem persists in many regions and territories, including Afghanistan, where thousands of innocent people have perished as a result of the use of such illegal weapons, transferred from abroad and placed at the disposal of the opposition in the conflict. The delegation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan anticipates that at its current session the General Assembly will look into this problem with greater seriousness.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes the proposal made by the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan in his address during the general debate, on 4 October, of an embargo on the sale of weapons, ammunition and other supplies to regions in conflict. My delegation also welcomes the statement of Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany, who stated that the European Union, together with a number of countries of central and eastern Europe, intends to submit a draft resolution concerning a code of conduct for conventional arms transfers. The sensitivity of the issue of illicit arms trafficking and its contribution to the exacerbation of conflicts and violations of human rights are all reasons for enacting appropriate provisions on this matter in any such code of conduct.

One aspect of the items under consideration is the relationship between disarmament and development, and the impact of the arms race and military expenditures on the development of human communities. The adverse implications of the current magnitude and continuing escalation of global military spending, in spite of some positive changes, is still a matter of concern. The morally untenable distortion of global priorities that has resulted in a growing diversion of scarce human, financial, material and technical resources to armaments, at the expense of basic human needs and economic and social progress, should be remedied and, indeed, reversed.

Afghanistan has always advocated the indefinite extension of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. The extension of the Treaty scheduled to be considered in 1995 continues to be vital for the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons and in the achievement of nuclear disarmament. We are also committed to the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace. We view them as a supplementary global effort towards the attainment of the objective of a world free from the scourge of nuclear weapons and the threat of their use. The adoption of the Addis Ababa draft treaty for an African nuclear-weapon-free zone was another major development to this end.

The substantial progress made in the Geneva negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is a considerable achievement towards concluding an effective multilateral and internationally applicable treaty. There is no doubt that this is another step bringing us closer to non-proliferation and disarmament.

Let me turn now to the subject of anti-personnel mines and land-mines. One of the obvious conclusions to be drawn from the war of occupation imposed on Afghanistan by the former Red Army is that the aggressor proved to have no legal obligation to care for the victims, the majority of whom were civilians, and included children.

The world community has always been concerned about unnecessary injuries to combatants and to civilian populations. These could be eliminated if we prohibited and restricted the more inhumane and indiscriminate methods of warfare. However, it is sad to see that military considerations too often come before humanitarian concerns. In our country, the most inhumane types of warfare were tested, including chemical and biological warfare. Fourteen years of war left more than 1.5 million dead, more than 2 million disabled, more than 1 million orphans and the same number of widows.

The ugliest phenomenon is the existence of more than 10 million anti-personnel land-mines in the country. When we look at the children, women and elderly with no limbs, or with only one, we are left to ponder the question of whether the laws of war are actually not merely a civilized interlude between pre-industrial and advanced industrial barbarism.

In spite of the increasing sophistication of anti-personnel weapons, they remain the most horrifying means of tacking political tasks of global significance. It is hard to believe that in the long run such means can stand in the way of necessary social changes. All they can do is greatly increase the human cost of those changes. For this reason, much stands to be gained by any measure the international community may adopt to restrict the development and use of the anti-personnel weapons that are threatening human communities, particularly in conflict zones, by the rapid proliferation of new and dangerous types of such weapons.

The decision of several States, including some mine-producing States, to impose export moratoriums on anti-personnel mines as a preliminary step seems to be a positive one, although the final answer still appears to be a total ban. It is our expectation that, before the first review conference of the Convention on the Prohibitions or Restrictions on the use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects, to be held in late 1995, adequate awareness and political will should be created not only with regard to the prohibition of their use but also on the production, manufacturing, stockpiling and transfer of those inhuman weapons.

Afghanistan is ready to submit its views to be taken into consideration with other amendments submitted to Protocol II, on land-mines and booby traps. However, we are still concerned with respect to the scope of application of the land-mines Protocol. The interpretation of the phrase "international character" may be flexible, although the implications of the use of these inhuman weapons, whether the conflicts are regional or international in character, are the same.

Mr. Kunda (Zambia): At the outset, allow me join other speakers who have already congratulated you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I also congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their elections.

I should also like to take this occasion to extend a special welcome to Mr. Peter Goosen of the Republic of South Africa, who has finally come to join us as our Rapporteur. His election was a manifest and eloquent demonstration of South Africa's welcome return to the United Nations family, a return we all embrace and happily witnessed.

I pledge my delegation's fullest support and cooperation to you, Sir, and to all the other Committee officers.

We meet once again in the First Committee to discuss issues relating to disarmament and international security in an atmosphere devoid of the erstwhile futile nuclear-arms race and its attendant cold-war polemics. But we are still living with the legacies of that era, none more unsettling than the continued existence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. By definition, these are not weapons of war; they are indeed weapons of mass destruction.

The continued existence of such weapons is a serious anomaly that can only be rectified through expeditious and speedy nuclear disarmament in this post-cold-war period. This brings me to the issue of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly known as the NPT regime, which, to all intents and purposes, is the engine of nuclear disarmament. Zambia acceded to the NPT three years ago because of its firm belief that that Treaty is the cornerstone of international peace and security, to which the Treaty regime has made a singular contribution since it was instituted. It has served the international community well, for the overwhelming majority of its adherents have steadfastly stood by their Treaty obligations to forgo possession of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, Zambia is fully aware that the NPT is an imperfect creation. To be sure, it is as inequitable as it has been from its inception. One of its distinguishing features is, without doubt, its discriminatory nature. In April 1995, the NPT States parties will revisit the Treaty at the twin-purpose review and extension conference to be held after 25 years of the Treaty's operation. Zambia attaches immense importance to that conference. The NPT will face its hardest test there, especially in the light of the call by some States parties for an indefinite and unconditional extension.

Let me, therefore, hasten to say that Zambia is in favour of an indefinite extension of the NPT. However, it is the unconditional component of the extension of the Treaty that is causing serious problems for my delegation. An unconditional extension is problematic because of its import for the cause of general and complete disarmament, to which Zambia is unequivocally committed.

To begin with, if the NPT is unconditionally and indefinitely extended in April 1995, its discriminatory features will be codified and will thus become immutable. Furthermore, we believe that there would be no incentive whatsoever for nuclear-weapon States to move towards nuclear disarmament, as called for in article VI of the Treaty.

In the circumstances, Zambia does not support an unconditional indefinite extension. In my delegation's considered view, such an extension would not serve the interests of the international community. It would only serve the partisan interests of the handful of nuclear-weapon States. Zambia believes rather that there is every ground to predicate the indefinite extension of the NPT on progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

To this end, Zambia wishes to see tangible progress on a number of significant collateral disarmament measures that would put us on the road to general and complete disarmament under effective and verifiable international control. Paramount among such measures is the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Such a treaty would freeze existing nuclear inventories and prevent qualitative improvements in nuclear-weapons systems. It would, if achieved, be a singular milestone in the race to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective and verifiable international control.

Indefinite extension of the Treaty would also be served by the adoption of a treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissile material for explosive purposes, otherwise known as a fissile material cut-off. My delegation therefore calls for the expeditious conclusion of the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on this important disarmament matter.

Furthermore, my delegation is of the considered view that an agreement on negative security guarantees for all non-nuclear-weapon States, coupled with an agreement on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons, would also go a long way in contributing to brighter prospects for an indefinite extension of the NPT. Similarly, provision of adequate technical assistance to all non-nuclear-weapon States to ensure the availability of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes on a non-discriminatory, predictable and long-term basis, would also enhance the chances of an indefinite extension. For now, it is common knowledge that article IV of the NPT, which provides for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material, scientific and technological information for peaceful uses of nuclear energy, has not been implemented.

Another important collateral disarmament measure relates to nuclear-weapon-free zones. Adherence to these zones by nuclear-weapon States would also significantly contribute to paving the way towards the indefinite extension of the NPT.

Enthusiastic compliance with the provisions of the NPT cannot be left to non-nuclear-weapon States only, as has been the case consistently over the years. Nuclear-weapon States too must do their part with similar enthusiasm, for their contribution in that regard is important, indeed critical, for launching the international community on the highway to general and complete disarmament under effective and verifiable international control. Their realization of the above six areas of international concern in the field of disarmament would constitute nothing less than progress towards an indefinite extension of the NPT.

In the larger context of disarmament, might I observe that it is now six years since the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the outcome of which is well known to all of us. In the intervening period, a lot of water has passed under the bridge. The most momentous development since then has been the end of the cold war, which in its heyday polarized and immobilized international relations for more than four decades. We are now in a new era in which there is a need to undertake a comprehensive assessment of efforts towards general and complete disarmament under effective and verifiable international control. To that end, my delegation wishes to reiterate the call made by the non-aligned ministerial Conference, held at Cairo last June, for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament at an appropriate time.

Our quest for nuclear disarmament, truly important though it is, should not make us lose sight of the imperative need for conventional disarmament. There are various hotbeds of conflict, both old and new, some of which have been menacing international peace and security since the founding of the United Nations. These conflicts have been and continue to be sustained by the use of conventional armaments. Today, Africa has the lion's share of these conflicts. These fratricidal conflicts in turn consume the lion's share of the national treasures of the countries concerned and thus retard their economic development. Zambia therefore calls for the early conclusion of a convention on conventional weapons. We believe that this would give meaning and substance to disarmament in all its aspects.

In the foregoing remarks, my delegation has reaffirmed its total commitment to disarmament in its comprehensive perspective. Now more than ever before, disarmament is imperative: it is imperative to reflect the post-cold-war era; it is imperative to consolidate the welcome trend towards the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means, as enshrined in the Charter of our Organization. Disarmament has now become as integral a component of the cause of sustainable development as of durable peace.

Mr. Altmatov (Kyrgyzstan) (*interpretation from Russian*): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. My delegation is ready to cooperate closely and constructively with you in the Committee's work.

At present, we are going through a difficult stage in the fulfilment of the principal responsibility of the United Nations, the maintenance of international peace and security. While there is evidence on the one hand of positive and encouraging factors in the disarmament process, particularly with respect to nuclear disarmament, on the other hand, a fact of this post-confrontational period is the trend towards the regionalization of the basic challenges to international security. We believe that this makes it essential to take greater account of the regional dimension of international security and to work to improve tried and true approaches and machinery.

Let me briefly state our position on the fundamental items on the First Committee agenda. In Kyrgyzstan's view, it is vitally important for international security that we strive to reduce and ultimately eliminate the nuclear component of existing threats. We welcome progress in the nuclear-disarmament dialogue between Russia and the United States.

My country has acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Kyrgyzstan did this out of a conviction that the Treaty's non-proliferation regime is a key element for strengthening security. We believe that the enactment of binding, clear-cut, meaningful security guarantees for non-nuclear States parties to the Treaty would create excellent conditions for universal adherence to the Treaty. We welcome the work towards such guarantees, and hope it will be successful.

We favour the use of regional measures to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. One such measure would be the declaration of Central Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This would be an important concrete contribution to strengthening security in the Asian region.

Kyrgyzstan attaches great importance to the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. In that connection, we welcome the moratorium on nuclear testing being observed by France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. We believe that China's joining the moratorium would be a positive step that would create conditions conducive to progress in this area.

In the context of nuclear issues, I should like to touch upon one particular problem that is of direct concern to my country. My country, Kyrgyzstan, was one of the main suppliers of raw uranium for the nuclear-arms programme of the former Soviet Union. We have inherited from this numerous caches of processed uranium. These caches are concentrated in the very epicentre of natural disasters such as landslides, mudslides and floods, which have become more frequent recently, posing the threat of ecological catastrophe on a nationwide scale. We would be very grateful if the world community could help us eliminate this danger.

Kyrgyzstan has signed the Convention banning chemical weapons and is prepared to fulfil our commitments under that Convention.

The growing trend towards the exacerbation of regional conflicts has brought to the forefront the question of how to control conventional weapons. My country favours the effective use of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We would also support the proposed moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines.

As we see it, arms control and disarmament are an important and integral part of multilateral and regional steps to maintain security and stability. Regional efforts are particularly important in such areas as confidence-building and the control of conventional weapons, as attested to by the experience of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In this connection, we would like to support Kazakhstan's initiative to convene a meeting on cooperation and confidence-building in Asia and Uzbekistan's proposal to organize, under United Nations auspices, a standing conference to deal with security problems in the region. These forums could provide the necessary framework for the development of regional cooperation and dialogue in order to strengthen stability and security in Central Asia.

We think it obvious that the First Committee should bear tremendous responsibility with respect to furthering the disarmament process and to strengthening global peace and security. It is our hope that the efforts being made to enhance the effectiveness of the First Committee's work will yield positive results. The delegation of Kyrgyzstan, for its part, is ready to make its own contribution to our common cause.

Mr. Kayumov (Tajikistan) (*interpretation from Russian*): Since my delegation is speaking for the first time at this session of the First Committee, may I very cordially congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the post of Chairman and offer my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau as well.

Peace-building through diplomatic channels and peace-keeping by military and civilian means presents complex problems. Dealing with them confronts the United Nations with new and sometimes extremely complex tasks. The situation in Tajikistan and at the Tajikistan-Afghan border, as is well-known, remains a tragic and explosive one. The escalation and the internationalization of the conflict may well lead to its spreading beyond the borders of Tajikistan to the territories of other countries of Central Asia.

Achieving peace and stability in Tajikistan will be possible only through dialogue. A prompt cease-fire and the disarming of all armed groups, with a display of good will and tolerance on the part of the parties to the conflict are necessary to reach a solution. No victory on the battlefield can provide a guarantee of durable peace, stability and security in Tajikistan.

The Government of Tajikistan is convinced that the security of the country and that of other countries in the region is indivisible. As a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), we faithfully coordinate all our activities in this area with the other members of the CIS. In this way, we try to strike a balance of interests between our own country and the other States of the Commonwealth. Normalization of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border and stabilizing the situation in Tajikistan are interrelated and interdependent processes. For that reason, the Heads of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan have signed an agreement to set up collective peace-keeping forces in the territory of Tajikistan. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five States officially notified the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, of this in their joint letter of 30 September 1993.

The creation of these collective peace-keeping forces as a regional agreement concluded in accordance with the principles and purposes of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations represent an important contribution by those countries to ensuring peace and stability in the Central Asian region.

At a meeting of the Heads of State of the CIS on 20 October in Moscow, the mandate of the joint peace-keeping forces in Tajikistan was extended for five months. It was decided to upgrade the status of the Commander of the peace-keeping forces to enable him to take bolder action and to help the legitimate Government of Tajikistan.

The joint strategic policy of these five member States of the CIS is to defend the southern border of Tajikistan. Their joint peace-keeping efforts are a decisive element in the combined effort to deal with the crisis on the Tajik-Afghan border. If a broader approach is taken to this question, as was emphasized by the Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Rakhmanov, in his statement at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on 30 September this year, it will also be possible to outline a whole new concept of security for the entire Central Asian region. We have not given up hope that the Security Council will see its way clear to considering this initiative again by holding a meeting of the Council to discuss the situation in and around Tajikistan and the question of giving the joint CIS peace-keeping force the status of a peace-keeping operation under United Nations auspices.

The Charter of the United Nations contains useful recommendations on relations between the United Nations and regional organizations in the peaceful settlement of local disputes. We favour the further enhancement of the collective capacity of the United Nations accurately and impartially to assess the implications of new internal conflicts.

There can be no doubt that the root cause of the crises in Tajikistan and in neighbouring Afghanistan are extremism, fanaticism and the incitement of inter-ethnic, interregional strife through division of the population into "us and them".

The Tajik people profoundly condemn the actions of extremists and terrorists, and oppose those who are trying to impose tyranny upon them. We request the international community to double and, indeed, triple its efforts to avert such a danger. Violence is repugnant in all its forms and the parties to the Tajik conflict must refrain from trying to solve their problems by force. Those who try by all means, including killing, to seize power in Tajikistan cannot be worthy of any support from the world community. In this context we welcome the arrival in Tajikistan and the deployment in the most explosive areas of the republic of the first group of 11 United Nations military observers. The purpose of their mission, in close cooperation with the joint commission composed of representatives of the Government and of the Tajik opposition, is independently and impartially to monitor the observance of the inter-Tajik agreement of 17 September 1994 on a temporary cease-fire and on the cessation of other hostilities on the Tajik-Afghan border and within the country.

The delegation of Tajikistan believes that any delay in settling the Tajik conflict will be to the advantage of those who are eager to divide the Tajik nation: those opposed to the integrity of Tajikistan.

The long-suffering people of Tajikistan condemn the actions of those forces who employ foreign mercenaries and weapons from the territories of adjacent States and thus set themselves against the nation.

Peace and security are not heaven-sent gifts. They need to be struggled for. And it is indeed a complex and relentless struggle for each and every person in their own country, their own region and the world as a whole. At the same time, it is necessary staunchly to defend the universal principles of human dignity and freedom.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.